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AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMATICAL ERRORS IN THE WRITTEN ENGLISH
COMPOSITIONS OF NIGERIAN STUDENTS IN FORMS III AND V

by



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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Nigeria is a multilingual nation where English as a second language, and as a medium of instruction for most of the country's educational system, co-exists with the several hundred indigenous languages. Occupying, as it does, the status of a second language, English is vulnerable to problems peculiar to languages in contact.

The need for the present study was to find an answer to the question: To what extent can errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and structural patterns present in written English compositions of Nigerian secondary school students be attributed to interlingual and intralingual interference? Specifically, the study addressed itself to the task of identifying linguistic problems in the written English compositions of Form III and Form V students with respect to errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and sentence structure, determining the frequency of each of the types of errors, categorizing and describing the errors which appear under three broad categories, namely: universal errors in English grammar (intralingual), errors due to mother tongue interference (interlingual), and errors of indeterminate source (mazes). The ancillary category, overgeneralization — an outgrowth of intralingual errors — has been described as resulting from the learners' attempts to simplify and regularize the complex rules of adult grammar. The final phases of the study's assignment were to compare the types and frequency of errors made by Form III and Form V pupils in order to ascertain which error types are most prevalent and at what level, and to determine whether a curriculum in English Composition for Form III and a remediation sequence in English Composition for Form V are warranted.

The sample for the study was obtained, via a formal request, from seven secondary schools situated in the Cross River State of Nigeria. The method of selection adopted was one of stratification by sex, type of school, linguistic group, and location. All the seven schools yielded the total data of 851 compositions. By using the technique of random sampling a manageable corpus of 55 compositions were obtained. Twenty of these came from the less numerous Form III pupils in the total sample; the remaining 35 compositions were those of Form V pupils.

The results of the analysis of the data reveal that intralingual interference accounted for more than seventy-five per cent of the errors made by the Nigerian pupils. That is to say, interference caused by the pupils' mother tongue contributed minimally to the overall aberrations.

The between-Forms comparison of error type and frequency, tentatively reveals that both Forms were at, or almost at, par in errors of Participle, Verb, Adjective, Preposition, Adverb, Qualifier, Modification, Translation, and Comparison. Form V pupils performed better, relative to the total word count, in the subcategories of Noun Number, Tense, Concordance, Article, Pronoun, Auxiliary, Wrong Word, Truncation, Imprecise Word, and Mazes; but they made more errors of Word Order than Form III pupils. Both Forms have problems with Tense and Aspect. These results suggest that an English Composition Curriculum for Form III and a remediation sequence in English Composition for Form V are warranted.

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CHAPTER I

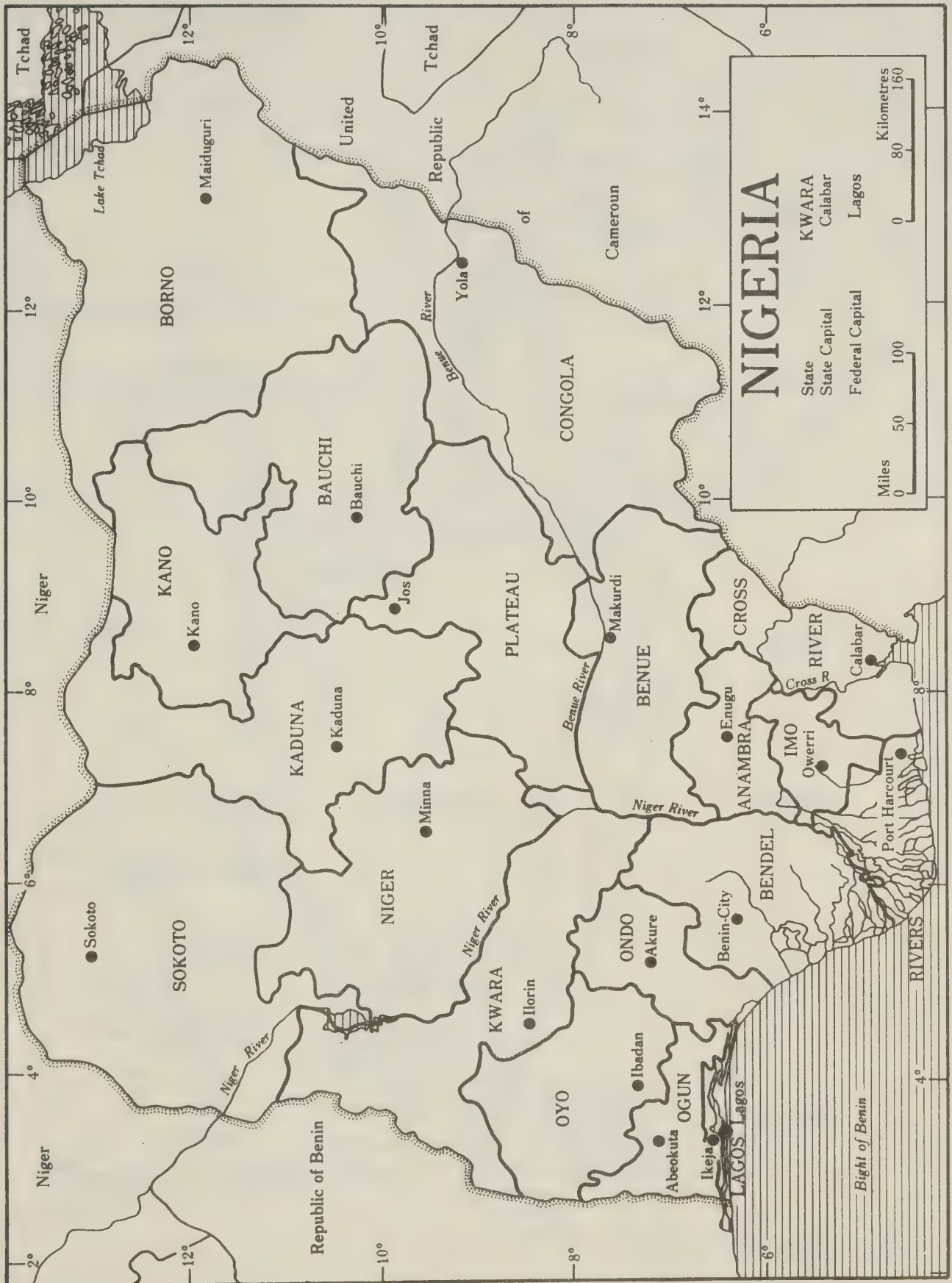
THE PROBLEM

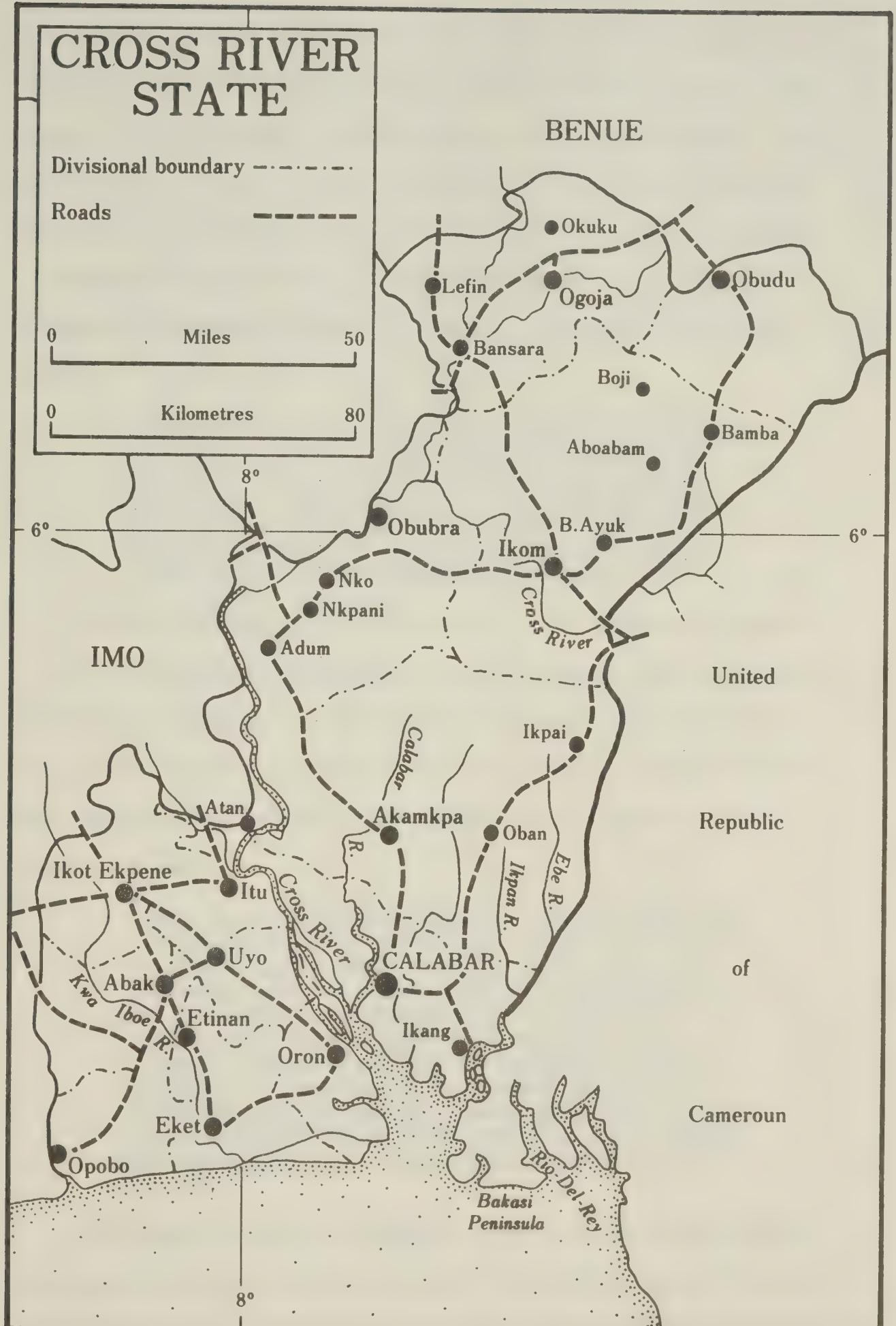
Background to the Study

After more than a century of British rule, the Federation of Nigeria came into an independent political existence on October 1, 1960. The Republic of Nigeria was proclaimed on October 1, 1963. For ease of administration and even development, the Republic has devised a nineteen-State structure. (Fig. 1). Only one of these States provides the focus for this investigation. This is the Cross River State (Fig. 2).

Although political independence has been achieved, the Nigerian nation still retains a powerful vestige of colonialism in the use of the English language. Used only by a literate minority, the English language has become not only a *de facto* second language but also the implied official language in Nigeria. For, in a multilingual Nigeria, English is considered to be politically neutral. Thus, it plays a unifying role. This view of the social function of English is further expressed by Bamgbose (1971) as follows:

By far the most important role of English in Nigeria today is its use as a medium of social communication. It is estimated that there are about 400 different local languages in Nigeria. Three of these languages (Hausa 15,000,000 speakers; Yoruba 10,000,000 speakers; Igbo 6,000,000 speakers) are often referred to as the major languages of the country; but very few persons speak more than one of these three languages. In practice, therefore, English is the only effective medium of communication between Nigerians from different linguistic backgrounds. This is why national activities have to be conducted in English (p. 36).





Since Nigerian languages coexist with English, the suggestion has been made in the legislatures as well as in the nation's newspapers that the country should decide on a national language. The choice of a national language would involve a selection of one of the many local languages and/or English. Advocates of a Nigerian language have argued that political independence is meaningless without an indigenous national language. According to Fadahunsi (1975):

Independence will be meaningful only when people are able to express their political and economic aspirations in a language understood clearly by the masses. Mass literacy — more feasible when an indigenous language is the medium of instruction is fundamental to modernisation of society — technologically or culturally (No. 3026, 1975).

Viewed from this perspective, choice of a Nigerian language as a national language would apparently lead to more people speaking the chosen language than those who now speak English in Nigeria. But such a choice would involve serious problems. Bamgbose (1971) has argued objectively about the nature of the problem to be met. He feels that:

Since the speakers of a Nigerian language generally constitute an ethnic group, one would be putting the ethnic group whose language is selected at an advantage over the others, and it is unlikely that the other groups would willingly accept such a situation. Another major problem would be how to produce technical works in the national language (textbooks on most subjects are available only in English); and, of course, there would still be a continuing need for a world language (like English) for the purposes of international communication (p. 47).

The Nigerian Federal Government is fully aware of the complex problems involved, and it has, so far, avoided making any decision

on the national language issue. It has since 1961 heeded the warning which appeared in the *Nigerian Daily Express* that:

The Parliament in session should not allow itself to get involved in the language tangle into which it is now being drawn. English is the accepted official language, the one outward expression of all that unites the various peoples in this country — to seek to replace English with some vernacular at a particular date line is asking for more than the greatest nationalist of them all can handle. The difficulties are not all of translating text-books and scientific formulae or even cash. What happened in India and more recently still in Ceylon should make the protagonists of this motion have second thoughts (Brosnahan, 1963:24).

It therefore appears that the national language question will remain an undecided one for a long time to come. Thus, the national language issue in Nigeria differs drastically from that in Tanzania where Swahili has officially replaced English as that country's official language, and as the language of instruction in the primary school (Lukendakenda, 1975:1-9).

English plays a crucial role in Nigeria. Bamgbose (1971) has described the situation as follows:

English is introduced as a subject in the first year of the primary school, and from the third year of the primary school up to and including the university level, it is the medium of instruction. This, in effect, means that the Nigerian child's access to the cultural and scientific knowledge of the world is largely through English. Since the products of the schools will be absorbed into types of employment where English is the official medium of communication, and where, consequently, proficiency in English is a necessary qualification, the pre-eminent position of English in the educational system is likely to remain for a long time (p. 35).

But, the pre-eminent position accorded to English in Nigeria's educational system is no guarantee that proficiency has been reached

in the use of the language. The comments by Grieve (1963) on candidates' mediocrity in their performance in written English language examinations conducted at the end of the Fifth Form, may be as applicable today as they were some thirteen years ago. This is a pointer to the need to improve standards of performance in this important subject.

Grieve (1963), who was for many years Assistant Registrar of the West African Examinations Council, and himself the author of one of the best known series of books for the secondary school English Course (Adetoro, 1965:366), described the standard attained in the use of English in the following words:

English language in the School Certificate examinations as it stands today is not a test of the essential language skills which a child should have either for work or for further study. A child may well pass the School Certificate in English language, and yet remain functionally illiterate for the rest of his life. Nowhere is there a test of ability to make notes, to use reference books, even to read a newspaper and make sense out of it — and it is these skills and others like them that the product of the secondary schools will need and to which much of the teaching in those schools ought, therefore, to be directed (Adetoro, 1965:366).

Among the remedies suggested by Grieve (1963), the most pertinent one was the institution of research into the practical problem of learning and teaching English. In this regard he observed:

It is to be hoped that Nigerian, Ghanaian and Sierra Leonian teachers and others will be able to participate much more fully at this stage, for, in the matter of learning English as a second language in Africa, one thing is certain: that the key to the door, if indeed a key exists at all, will ultimately be found by Africans and not by English or Englishmen or American, however well qualified the latter may be because only Africans can possibly know

all the real difficulties English presents to them,
and only they can find a way to their solution
(Adetoro, 1965:366).

Since Grieve (1963) made this comment, Nigerian teachers of English, notably Bamgbose (1971) and Olu-Tomori (1971), have made descriptive studies of the nature and source of errors in the oral and written English of students who are Yoruba-speaking Nigerians in the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo. Bamgbose's findings have partly confirmed Grieve's observation. He has outlined areas of difference between English in Nigeria and English in other English-speaking countries. Some of the areas of difference relevant to the present study include the phonological, grammatical and lexical patterns which he has attributed to the influence of the source language. Olu-Tomori's study of syntactic structures in Form V compositions is treated under the Review of the Literature.

Purpose of the Study

For most pupils, there is a time lag between when they learn their local vernacular and when their second language acquisition begins. In Nigeria, the primary school age is six. At this age, a child has already acquired at least oral competence in his mother tongue. The mastery of the sound system of his first language is now being broadened with the addition of the remaining two skills of reading and writing. At the same time, the child is being exposed to the learning of English as a second language.

It appears likely that, in the process, Nigerian pupils transfer aspects of the sound system, structural patterns, word order, and vocabulary items from their first language into English.

The question being asked in this study is: To what extent can errors in morphology, syntax, lexical items, and structural patterns present in written English compositions of Nigerian secondary school students, be attributed to universal errors in English grammar and to errors made as a consequence of the writer's first language?

By looking at the nature of errors analyzed in terms of the character of the writer's mother tongue, the investigator hopes to make comparison between errors and their source.

Statement of the Problem

The problem, then, is to ascertain the nature and extent of errors in morphology, syntax, lexical items and structural patterns in the written English compositions of Forms III and V secondary students from the Cross River sub-groups of the Benue-Congo.

Specifically, the purpose of the study is to:

1. Identify linguistic problems in written English compositions of Form III and Form V students with respect to errors in: morphology, syntax, lexical items and structural patterns.
2. Determine the frequency of each of the types of errors.
3. Describe and categorize the errors which appear, under three broad categories, namely: universal errors in English grammar, errors due to mother tongue interference, and errors of indeterminate source.
4. Compare the types and frequency of errors made by Form III and Form V students in order to ascertain which error types are most prevalent and at what level.
5. Determine whether a curriculum in English Composition for

Form III and a remediation sequence in Composition for Form V are warranted.

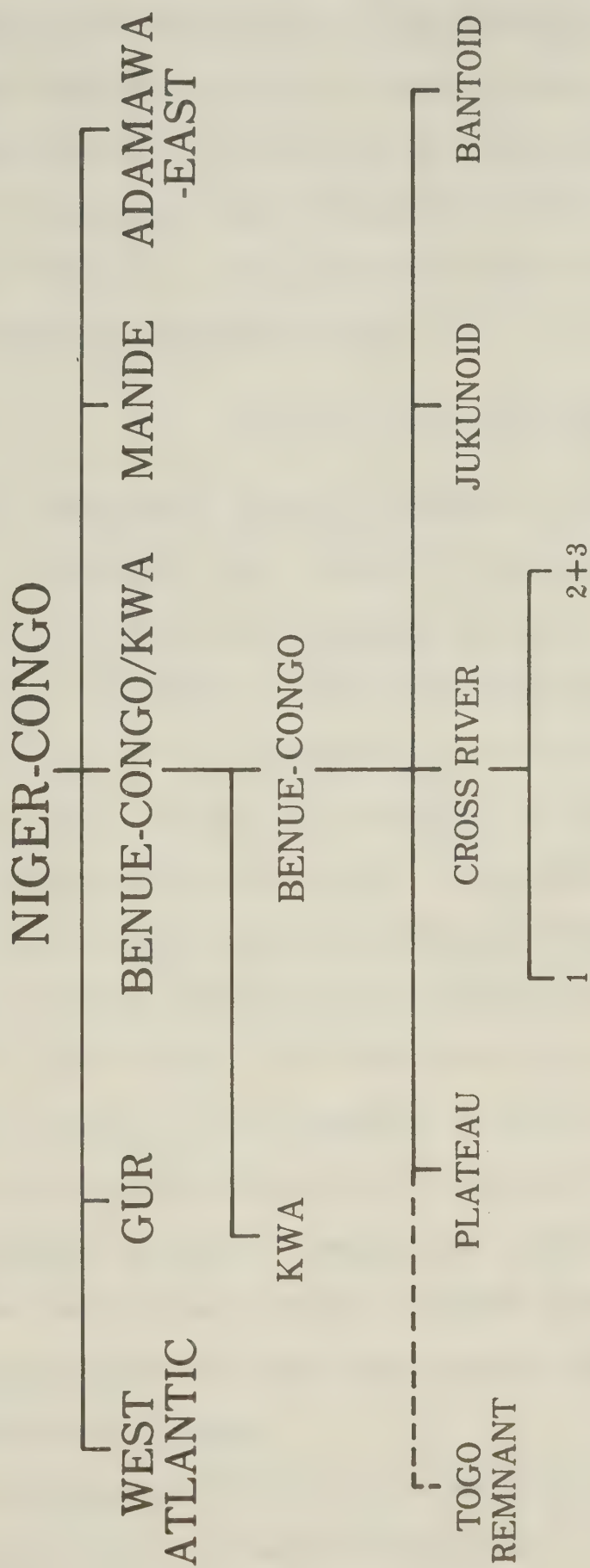
Scope and Delimitations of the Study

This investigation was limited to only those schools which are situated in linguistic communities where the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo are spoken. These groups form a branch of Greenberg's (1963) Niger-Congo family of languages (Fig. 3).

The rationale for confining the investigation to one of the nineteen states was as follows:

1. Most of the speakers of the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo constitute the population of the Cross River State of Nigeria. All the state-administered secondary schools in the area of investigation come under the scrutiny of a central State School Board based at the State Capital, Calabar.
2. There is a spillover of some subgroups of the Cross River 3 languages into the Rivers State of Nigeria, and some subgroups of Cross River 2 languages into the Benue and Plateau States, and the Imo and Anambra States of Nigeria.
3. By concentrating on schools within the specified area of the investigation, a deeper study of the problem would be made than would otherwise be the case if energies were thinly spread on a more ambitious study.
4. Absence of mutual intelligibility between speakers of the Kwa group of the Niger-Congo represented by: Yoruba, Edo, and Igbo, and speakers of the Benue-Congo typified by: Plateau, Jukunoid, Cross River, and Bantoid; or between speakers of the

NIGER-CONGO FAMILY TREE



Source: Paul DeWolf, The Noun Class System of Proto-Benue Congo, Mouton, 1971, p.180.

Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo and those of Hausa, has set a limit to the extent of the present research.

5. The investigator himself is from the Cross River State and, apparently, he has the advantage of being able to identify errors of interlingual origin with greater ease than would an investigator with little or no knowledge of any of the languages spoken in the area of investigation.

Significance of the Study

The importance of English in Nigeria's educational system can hardly be overemphasized. Earlier in this chapter English was described as a subject introduced in the first year of the primary school, and as a medium of instruction from the third year of the primary school up to and including the university level (Bamgbose, 1971:35). Also, the West African School Certificate syllabus (Appendix A) has specified that in order for candidates to qualify for an award of a certificate they must offer a minimum of six subjects or a maximum of nine subjects selected from any four of the seven groups listed in the syllabus. In either case English language is compulsory.

The present study was suggested in part by Grieve's (1963) comment on candidates' mediocrity in their performance at the West African School Certificate examinations (WASCE), and by his suggestion that West African teachers of English institute a research into the practical problems confronting Nigerian pupils learning English as their second language.

In undertaking this study the researcher envisaged the following benefits for Nigerian teachers of English:

1. It was felt that the results of the study could in some way be helpful to classroom teachers in planning their remedial English language programmes for Forms III and V. It has been suggested that error analysis can in some way help teachers to determine a learner's current interlanguage and intralanguage performances (Cohen, 1975:111; Corder, 1974:170). For example, if the present study revealed that some of the errors identified were caused by interference from the first language (L1), then this information would be a pointer to the need for teachers to put more emphasis on the difference between the first language and the target language in terms of the features affected. Or, if the present investigation revealed that intralingual errors identified were due to inherently confusing aspects of the target language, then Nigerian teachers of English could achieve better results by introducing a few relevant rules or re-emphasizing already existing but incorrectly applied ones to the features concerned. Whitehead (1968:213) has suggested that direct teaching should be concerned with errors which pupils make in their compositions, particularly those errors which the pupils can readily learn to avoid.

2. The researcher also bore in mind the possibility of the results of this study leading teachers of English towards a reorientation about the framing of instructional objectives for Forms III and V.

Mager (1962) has defined an instructional objective as

. . . an intent communicated by a statement describing a proposed change in a learner — a statement of what the learner is to be like when he has successfully completed a learning experience (p. 3).

To the present investigator, this definition seems appropriate and applicable to a second language teaching and learning situation.

Likewise, Wright's (1976) seven-point "characteristics of an excellent teacher of English" have been considered relevant to the formulation of instructional objectives. Wright (1976) suggests that an excellent teacher of English should:

- (i) know cognitively where he is going with his students,
- (ii) be able to state with some preciseness the objectives he is pursuing,
- (iii) be able to demonstrate that he is pursuing viable goals by articulating sound reasons for their viability,
- (iv) be able to develop adequate plans to reach his objectives,
- (v) be able to execute his planning effectively,
- (vi) be able to do the evaluating necessary to determine whether the objectives are being reached,
- (vii) be able to restructure his objectives and his teaching on the basis of evaluation and pedagogical experience (p. 34).

The present researcher's seven years of English language teaching experience in his own country lends support to Wright's (1976) suggested characteristics and strengthens his hope that better results could be obtained if Nigerian teachers of English would reformulate and execute sound instructional objectives on the basis of the outcome of the present study.

3. The researcher also felt that insights from this study could lead to possible changes in the areas of emphasis for examiners of English language at the West African School Certificate level.

Definition of Terms

(a) *Linguistic Terms*

Adjectival: a group of words performing the function of an adjective.

Adjective: a form class often marked in English by the ability to take comparative and superlative suffixes; for example, *big*, *biggest*, and *bad*, *worse*, *worst*.

Adverb: a form class sometimes marked in English by the ability to take the *-ly* suffix; for example, *lightly*, *heavily*, are adverbs.

Adverbial: a group of words performing the function of an adverb.

Affix: a bound morpheme attached to a stem. For example, *pre* in *preeminent*, *ex* in *export*. It may be inflectional or derivational.

Agentive nominal: a count noun formed by adding the morpheme *-er* to the base form of a verb.

Agreement: a dependency between two or more words involving inflection for one or more of such characteristics as case, gender, number, and person (Wardhaugh, 1972:203).

Allomorphs: positional variants of a morpheme. For example, the endings of *goats*, *dogs*, and *benches* all have the meaning 'plural' but there is a phonemic difference among them (/s/-/z/-/ez/); they are all allomorphs of a plural morpheme.

Ambiguity: a semantic situation in which a sentence has two or more meanings. For example, *The man painted the chair in the corner*, or, *As soon as the rain stopped the painter put on another coat*.

Antecedent: the word or word groups to which a pronoun refers.

Applied Linguistics: the use of linguistics in the teaching of foreign languages, reading and spelling, and in the teaching of English generally.

Aspect: the feature of a verb which specifies the action of a verb as beginning, ending, being repeated. For example, the progressive aspect denotes continuing action and in surface structure it is indicated by a form of 'be' and the suffix -ing (Liles, 1972:152); as in *The airplane is landing*.

Base: a morpheme to which affixes can be attached. For example, *wise* in *wisely*, *-vise* in *revise* (Wardhaugh, 1972).

Bilingual: a person who alternates two languages.

Bilingualism: the use of two languages alternately by the same person (Weinreich, 1955:148).

Case: an inflected form of a word which indicates the syntactic relationship of that word to another in a grammatical construction. For example, *them* is in the objective case in the sentence *I want them*.

Class: a set of linguistic forms sharing a common characteristic; for example, nouns can be pluralized, relative pronouns require an antecedent.

Clause: a construction containing a subject and a finite verb.

Collocation: the likelihood that several words will occur in the same environment; for example, *car, road, drive, wheel* (Wardhaugh, 1972).

Complements: words or a group of words which follow a verb phrase in order to complete a predicate (Wardhaugh, 1972). For example, *glad* in both *Mary is glad* and *Joan made Mary glad* and in

It was *Joan* that made *Mary* glad.

Concord: a dependency between two or more words involving inflection for one or more of such characteristics as case, gender, number, and person.

Contact: a situation in which two or more languages are used alternately by the same users.

Context: a language activity involving linguistic and non-linguistic features which constitute actual situations.

Contrastive analysis: a concept credited to Lado (1957) which stresses the search for points of contrast between two languages in order to direct instructional strategies toward remediation of errors noticed.

Co-occurrence: a determination of what words can go into a string with what other words (Hook and Crowell, 1970:164).

Copula: any part of the verb 'be' used as the main verb in the predicate of a clause (Wardhaugh, 1972:207).

Deep structure: a hypothetical grammatical construct consisting of lexicon and phrase structure which determines the meaning of a sentence.

Determiner: a word that usually though not always immediately precedes a noun. For example, *the*, *a*, *my*, *his*, *this*, and *that*.

Deviant sentence: a sentence that appears strange or unusual to a native speaker for semantic or syntactic reasons (Wardhaugh, 1972).

Embedded sentence: a dependent clause linked to a matrix sentence by a modifier. An embedded sentence is also called a

constituent sentence (Thomas, 1965).

Error analysis: an improvement on contrastive analysis. Error analysis stresses a closer study of the performance of actual learners and the direction of remedial strategies toward such errors.

Form words: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs; they are also content words.

Function words: words such as: *the, not, in, to, quite*, which have little lexical meaning but which perform important syntactic functions. Function words are also structure words (Wardhaugh, 1972).

Gender: a classification of words usually related in some way to the sex of the referents.

Generalization: a change of meaning resulting in a word covering a wider range of meaning than it once did.

Generative grammar: a grammar that produces sentences by rule and assigns a structural description to each sentence generated (Wardhaugh, 1972:210).

Generative-transformational grammar: a grammar that generates sentences, assigns structural descriptions to these sentences, and relates their deep structure and meanings to the surface structures and sounds (Wardhaugh, 1972:211).

Genitive case: a grammatical inflection to indicate possession. For example, *Stella's* in *Stella's wrist-watch* is marked for the genitive case.

Gerund: a construction derived from the base form of a verb (verb + -ing) and used as a nominal.

Grammar: the student's internalized system of rules in his

mother tongue; the investigator's description of these rules.

Generally, the grammar of a language is the user's linguistic knowledge of the structure and production of his language.

Hybrid structure: a string of unintelligible morphemes in a construction. For example, 'The fate on the deciding merry' (Olu-Tomori, 1971:214).

Imperatives: a string of morphemes indicating a command, without a noun phrase in a subject position. For example, *Bring your luggage into the room*.

Infix: a replative allomorph inserted within a word, as opposed to prefixes and suffixes, as in *sang*, and *rode* (Stageberg, 1971).

Inflectional affix: a suffix added to a word stem in English surface structure to express such features as plurality, possession, past tense, third person singular, progressive, perfective, comparative and superlative degrees (Liles, 1972:144).

Interference phenomena: instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in speech or writing as a result of language contact (Weinreich, 1970).

Intralingual interference: errors resulting from the learner's generalizations to new sentences on the basis of the corpus of the second language to which he has been exposed (Nemser, 1969).

Intuition: a native speaker's use of his linguistic competence to determine errors in the speech or writing of a learner of his language.

Kernel sentence: a basic sentence consisting of two main parts — a noun phrase and a verb phrase.

Lexicon: the vocabulary of a language. In English, it contains both words and morphemes, each instance of which is called a lexical item. It provides information about grammatical classifications, meanings, and pronunciations of each lexical item (Stageberg, 1971: 293). It is synonymous with a dictionary.

Linguistics: the scientific study of the structure of a language.

Linguistic competence: a person's knowledge of his language.

Linguistic performance: a person's actual production of his language in speech or writing.

Matrix sentence: a name for an independent clause in transformational grammar.

Maze: a synonym for hybrid structure.

Modal auxiliaries: a small group of structure words such as: *can, may, must, ought*, that occur in close relationship to verbs. The constituents announce that a verb is coming.

Modification: a grammatical structure comprising a headword and a modifier.

Mood: a change in form indicating the way in which the speaker thinks of the action or state described by the verb (Hook and Crowell, 1970:31).

Morpheme: the minimal unit of meanings. For example, *dolls* contains two such units and *unkindly* three. A short segment of a language that meets three criteria; namely:

1. It has to be a word or part of a word that has meaning.
2. It cannot be divided into smaller meaningful parts without violation of its meaning or without meaningless remainders.

3. It recurs in differing verbal environments with relatively stable meaning (Stageberg, 1971:85).

Morphology: the study of morphemes and their combination in words (Wardhaugh, 1972:214). The study of words and their meaningful parts.

Morphophoneme: a phonological unit corresponding to a set of phonemes occurring within the allomorphs of a particular morpheme: the distribution of the set of phonemes in the morphophoneme is explicable in terms of phonological environment. For example, the //s// morphophoneme of the English plural is predictably realized by three sibilants (/s-z-ez/) according to the final phoneme of the noun to which it is attached (*cat, dog, church*) (Wardhaugh, 1972:214).

Morphophonemic changes: changes in the phonemic form of allomorphs as they are grouped into words, or as they appear in different forms of a word. For example, *calf* becomes *calves*, *child* becomes *children*, *wife* becomes *wives*, *self* becomes *selves* (Stageberg, 1971).

Native speaker: one who speaks his mother tongue or source language.

Nominal: a word group or a word which performs the function of a noun and is testable by substitution. A word group is a nominal if it can be replaced by one of these: *a noun or noun phrase, this, that, these, those, he/him, she/her, it, they/them* (Stageberg, 1971: 203). For example, *That she is beautiful is evident to all*.

Nominalization: a transformation that alters or rearranges a word or group of words so that they are able to perform the function of a noun phrase in a sentence (Thomas, 1965).

Noun phrase: a noun and all the words and word groups that belong

with the noun and cluster around it. The noun itself is called the head-word or head, and the other word and word groups are modifiers of the noun (Stageberg, 1971:163).

Paradigm: a componential analysis representing grammatical categories.

Parts of speech: form classes such as nouns, and verbs, or a particular kind of function word such as determiner or preposition (Wardhaugh, 1972:216).

Phoneme: a minimal significant contrastive unit in the phonological system of a language (Wardhaugh, 1972:216).

Phonology: the lowest level of study, dealing with the system of speech sounds, in the descriptive structural grammar of a language.

Phrase: any structure except one containing a subject and a predicate.

Phrase structure: a component of deep structure which provides all the basic grammatical constituents such as noun phrase, verb phrase, noun, verb, and adjective; it specifies the relationship of these constituents to one another (Stageberg, 1971:293).

Predication: a grammatical construction consisting of a subject noun phrase and a verb phrase. For example, *The cow grazes and the dog barks*.

Prefix: an affix which comes before a base, as in *re-build*.

Relative clause: a clause that is part of a noun phrase and modifies the head noun in that phrase. For example, *The man who came here yesterday was a beggar*. Relative clauses may in most cases be introduced by *that*, *who*, *whom*, *whose*, *which*.

Semantics: the study of grammatical meaning of words with

respect to word positions.

Sentence: a string of morphemes which consist of a noun phrase and a verb phrase.

Source language: a synonym for the learner's mother tongue.

Stem: a morpheme or morphemes to which an affix can be attached.

Structure: relationship between constituents in speech or writing.

Structural grammar: the production of a systematic analysis of sentences that have been spoken or written by native users of a language as indicated by available data.

Surface structure: one of the two major aspects of transformational grammar which determines the pronunciation of sentences. It is derived from deep structure through transformation.

Suffix: an affix which may come after the base as in *man-ly*.

Syntax: the arrangements and interrelationships of words and phrases, clauses, and sentences (Wardhaugh, 1972:221).

Target language: the language a second-language learner is learning.

Taxonomy: a hierarchical arrangement of terms showing inclusion and contrast (Croft, 1972:430).

Tense: time expression indicated by a verb, or by a modal auxiliary and a verb.

Transformation: a rule which changes the deep structure of a sentence into a form that we say or hear. For example, *John kicks a ball. The ball is kicked by John.*

Transformational grammar: a grammar which derives surface structures from deep structures by the application of rules.

Translation: the transfer of the thought patterns of a learner's

source language into the target language.

Verb phrase: a verb and all the words and word groups which belong with the verb and cluster around it. The verb itself is called the head-word or head, and the other words and word groups are the auxiliaries, modifiers and complements of the verb.

Word: a morpheme or combination of morphemes which native speakers regard as a minimal pronounceable meaningful unit (Wardhaugh, 1972:222).

(b) *Nigerian Language Groups*

Bantoid: A language group consisting of two main subdivisions: Non-Bantu Bantoid and Bantu (Wolf, 1971:18).

Bantu: Languages spoken in Central and East Africa, parts of South Africa, and parts of Nigeria. These languages show the following characteristics:

(1) the presence of a mu-noun prefix in the singular of the 'person/people' gender (class pair).

(2) the presence of this same prefix in another singular class outside of the person class.

(3) the presence of a ma-prefix as plural to 'eye' or 'tooth' or 'breast'. In a typical Bantu noun class system, nouns are divided into a number of classes marked by prefixes, for example: mu-. Many of these classes form pairs, denoting singular and plural.

Benue-Congo: One of the six major branches of the Niger-Congo (Greenberg, 1963, 1966; Wolf, 1971), comprising: Plateau, Jukunoid, Cross River and Bantoid.

Cross River subgroups: One of the four subgroups of the Benue-Congo.

Cross River 1: One of the two main divisions of the Cross River subgroups, comprising: Bekwara (Yakoro), Bete, Bendi, Basang, Busi, Bisu, Ukpe, Bayobiri, Ubang, Alege, Eastern Mbube, Utugwang, Okorogung, Okorotung, Boki (Wolf, 1971:17).

Cross River 2 and 3: One of the two main divisions of the Cross River subgroups, comprising: Tita, Gbo, Yigha, Mbembe (with various dialects), Nkukoli (Ekuri, Nkololle), Ko (including Ugep and Nkpani) Lulumo, Okuni, Ikom, Ukelle, Oring (a dialect cluster including Ufia, Effium, Okpoto-Mtezi, Ugbala, and Iteeji), Humone, Binim Erei, Dim, Gwine (Akunakuna), Umon, Akpet; Okoyong, Korop, Bakpinka (Uwet), Uyanga, Efik, Ibibio, Anang, Okobo, Oron, Eket, Ibeno, Andoni, Ogoni, Abua (Wolf, 1971:17—18; Greenberg, 1963, 1966; Talbot, 1912; Williamson, 1971; Crabb, 1965).

Efik: One of the few relatively well studied Benue-Congo languages, with a considerable literature, used as a standard spoken and written language by speakers of other languages in the group. It has a few alternating singular and plural noun prefixes, but there is a regular concord in the verb prefixes with singular or plural subjects and vestigial singular/plural concord of adjectives with nouns (Williamson, 1971). Wolf (1971) states that the noun class system has completely vanished in some Benue-Congo languages, notably: Efik, Ibibio, Anang, Andoni, and Obulo.

Edo: One of the Nigerian languages and a member of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo.

Ekoid: Nigerian Bantu languages of Ogoja, in Cross River 1, made up of three major subgroups, namely: Ekparabong and Balep, Bendeghe-Northern Etung, Northern Etung, and Southern Etung, and

Efutop, Nde, Nselle, Nta, Abanyom, Nkim, Nkum, Nnam, and Ekajuk (Crabb, 1965:5—6; Wolf, 1971:18).

Hausa: One of the three major Nigerian languages of Chado-Hamitic family (Paden, 1968).

Ibibio: One of the members of the Efik-Andoni group in Cross River 3, regarded as the parent of the Efik language (Goldie, 1964), it is less studied than Efik (Williamson, 1971).

Idoma: One of the Nigerian languages and a member of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo.

Igbo: One of the three major Nigerian languages which belongs to the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo.

Jukunoid: A Nigerian language and a subgroup of the Benue-Congo.

Kwa: One of the six major branches of the Niger-Congo, to which group belong the following Nigerian languages: Edo, Igbo, Idoma, Nupe, and Yoruba (Armstrong, 1964; Wolf, 1971; Williamson, 1971).

Niger-Congo: The main family of Sudanic languages, renamed by Greenberg (1955) and defined by Armstrong (1964).

Nupe: A Nigerian language and a member of the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo.

Plateau: A Nigerian language and a member (a subgroup) of the Benue-Congo.

Vernacular: A person's local mother tongue such as Efik/Ibibio.

Yoruba: One of the three major Nigerian languages which belongs to the Kwa branch of the Niger-Congo.

(c) Operational Terms

Chi-square: a non-parametric statistic for testing independence

between variables.

Data: the eight hundred and fifty-one English compositions written by pupils in Forms III and V.

Forms III and V: equivalents of grades nine and eleven.

Hypotheses: assumptions to be tested.

Parameter: a characteristic used in describing a population. For example, the average score in English compositions of all Form III pupils from the Cross River State in 1976.

Population: all Forms III and V pupils in the Federal Republic of Nigeria.

Randomization: the process of selecting a representative sample of fifty-five compositions from the total available corpus of eight hundred and fifty-one.

Sample: Forms III and V pupils from the seven secondary schools selected from the Cross River State of Nigeria.

Statistical inference: the generalizations made on the population from observations made on the members of the sample.

Null Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses have been stated to guide the study in ascertaining which error types are most prevalent and at what level:

1. *There is no significant difference in the distribution of morphological error types between Form III and Form V compositions.*
2. *There is no significant difference in the distribution of syntactical error types between Form III and Form V compositions.*
3. *There is no significant difference in the distribution of*

lexical error types between Form III and Form V compositions.

4. *There is no significant difference in the distribution of sentence error types between Form III and Form V compositions.*

Of all these, the major hypothesis to be tested is the fourth one because, in most cases, differences in the distribution of error types seemed more likely to increase at the level of sentence structure than at any other structural level below it. Moreover, it has been suggested earlier in this chapter that there is no clear distinction in language between grammar and lexis; the distinction made between them is a technical matter which enables the analyst to achieve a more effective result in his analysis.

The investigator has chosen the chi-square statistic for testing the significance of each of the four hypotheses at the .05 level. Hays (1963:579) has suggested the use of the chi-square statistic for testing independence or association in a study involving categorical or qualitative distributions of data.

Percentage has also been used to present frequency of errors computed in relation to: (a) total number of words written in the compositions by each Form, (b) per opportunity of occurrence, (c) for the two Forms combined (see Chapter IV for details).

Limitations and Assumptions

Limitations

The findings of the present study have been limited by the fact that the samples were drawn from subgroups in only one of the six major branches of Greenberg's (1963) Niger-Congo family of languages; namely: the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo. Second, the

testing instrument was administered by Form Instructors and not by the investigator himself. Third, instead of asking the subjects to write a composition on two topics, which could have strengthened the tests' reliability, the investigator restricted the subjects to writing on any one of the six topics for the reason that the tests were administered thousands of miles away from the investigator himself, and there was the fear that the success of the study might be jeopardized by making too much demand on the subjects and their Form Instructors.

Assumptions

The conclusions drawn from this study have been based on the available sample obtained from seven schools (Table 1, p. 66). These conclusions which have been used for generalizing about the seven schools in the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo can also be used less formally to generalize about other secondary schools within the Cross River subgroups. The assumption is that errors made by Forms III and V students in the representative sample may not appreciably differ from those likely to be made by students at these two levels elsewhere within the same Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo.

Summary

In this chapter, an attempt has been made to show that the English language, a survivor of colonial days, coexists with Nigerian languages, and enjoys pride of place both as a language of social communication among the country's numerous ethnic groups and, to a

large extent, as a medium of instruction in Nigeria's educational system.

It has also been pointed out that although English is used for most of the teaching and learning in school, Nigerian pupils have not as yet attained mastery in the use of it.

The present study has been undertaken in an attempt to investigate, identify, categorize and describe the nature, source, cause, and frequency of errors which emerge in the written compositions of Forms III and V pupils in the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo, in terms of morphology, syntax, lexis and sentence structure.

It is hoped the findings of the study will motivate Nigerian teachers of English to plan remedial English language programmes and to readjust their formulation of instructional objectives to meet the needs of the two Forms.

Besides its pedagogical significance, the outcome of the study could lead to changes in the areas of emphasis for English language examiners at the West African School Certificate level.

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE RELEVANT LITERATURE

Criteria of Grammatical Analysis

The present study is an investigation of the nature of linguistic problems which appear in the English compositions of Nigerian pupils in Forms III and V. The pupils' performance in English as their second language has provided the investigator with the data for determining the strength of their internalized English grammar. The written corpus also mirrors the writers' underlying linguistic competence (Chomsky, 1970). In order to determine the pupils' internalized grammar the concept of grammar must be defined.¹

Francis (1964) has assigned the following three meanings to the word 'grammar':

1. the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged in order to convey larger meanings,
2. the branch of linguistic science which is concerned with the description, analysis, and formulation of formal language patterns,
3. linguistic etiquette (p. 70).

Francis' (1964) explication of the tripartite meaning of grammar has been directed against the confusion which sometimes arises when critics blame teachers for not teaching their pupils a sort of prescriptive grammar. Moreover, inherent in such a reprimand is an assumption that a learner's proficiency in the use of the structural patterns of his language is determined by the degree of his exposure to grammar as a branch of linguistic science. Francis (1964),

¹The views in this chapter about grammar reflect different linguists' opinions in the literature about grammar as an evolutionary concept.

however, feels that such an assumption may be ineffectual in a situation in which the forms of grammar to which the learner has been exposed were inaccurate. In other words, a learner can hardly ever improve the effectiveness of his grammatical usage if he has been taught inaccurate grammatical analysis (p. 70).

The search for criteria for grammatical analysis, description, and classification has resulted in the development, at different historical periods, of many schools of grammar. Three of the most frequently discussed ones are the 'traditional', the 'structural', and the 'generative-transformational' schools.

The Traditional School Grammar

The English language is a member of the Indo-European family of languages to which Latin and Greek also belong (Francis, 1964). English is one of the various vernacular languages of Europe which witnessed a rise in prestige during the later Middle Ages and early Renaissance (Francis, 1964; Liles, 1972). Grammars of English based upon the devices and distinctions of Latin grammar (Francis, 1964) began to appear during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. English grammars written then reflected the tradition of parsing corresponding to the model and categories set up for Latin by Donatus and Priscian (Liles, 1972). Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, there was little research carried out on English grammar. Thus, the traditional format and definitions have continued to appear in many school texts up to the third quarter of the twentieth century (Liles, 1972:8).

In terms of definition, classification, and description of

language, the traditional school grammars persistently recognize eight parts of speech — namely: noun, pronoun, verb, adjective, adverb, preposition, conjunction and interjection (Fries, 1952:65). Each of these parts is defined on the basis of its meaning or function in a sentence. Nouns and verbs are defined on the basis of meaning; others, such as adjectives and adverbs, are delineated on the basis of function (Liles, 1972:11). For instance, a noun or substantive is defined as the name of a living being, or lifeless thing. A verb is that part of speech by means of which we make an assertion or ask a question (Curme, 1947:22). A pronoun is a word used instead of a noun (Curme, 1947:13). An adjective is a word used to modify a noun or pronoun (Liles, 1972:9). A conjunction is a word that joins together sentences or parts of a sentence (Curme, 1947:29).

At the sentence level, the traditional grammarian defines a sentence as an expression of a thought or feeling by means of a word or words used in such form and manner as to convey the meaning intended (Curme, 1947:97); or, as a group of words that expresses "a complete thought" (Hook and Crowell, 1970:34). The problem posed by this definition is that it is impossible to say precisely what a complete thought is.

Besides defining the parts of speech in relation to meaning and function, the traditional grammarian also resorted to the use of complex classifications of each of the parts. For example, a noun is classified as (1) common, (2) proper, (3) compound, and (4) derivative (Curme, 1947:11—13). A pronoun is assigned seven classes: personal, reflexive, reciprocal, relative, indefinite, interrogative, and descriptive or limiting (Curme, 1947:13--18). Verbs are

classified into: transitive, intransitive, and linking verbs; when a verb enters into a close relationship with an object it is said to form a unit known as a compound (Curme, 1947:22—23).

This meaning-and-function based definition of parts of speech has been described as vague, imprecise, loose, unscientific, and complex; it has, therefore, been considered to be inadequate to account fully for the structural relationships that constitute a formal linguistic expression. A good description and analysis of language should conform to certain requirements laid down for any satisfactory scientific theory. Francis (1964) has outlined some of the requirements as (1) simplicity, (2) consistency, (3) completeness, and (4) usefulness for predicting behaviour of phenomena not brought under immediate observation when the theory was formed (p. 71).

Since traditional grammar has failed to meet these requirements, particularly those of consistency and simplicity, it is presumably unsatisfactory.

It would appear, then, that analysis and classification of English or any other language require three bases, namely, "form," "function," and "meaning." Francis (1964) has postulated that of the three bases, the one most amenable to objective description, analysis, and classification of a vigorously scientific type is "form" and that the most shaky of all these bases is "meaning."

Structural Linguistics

The quest for a scientific approach to analysis, description, and classification of language which the traditional grammar could

not handle effectively was met, to some extent, by the rise of a school of structural linguists in the second quarter of the twentieth century. Much of the credit for the birth of structural linguistics in North America goes to Leonard Bloomfield (1933) whose influential manual for linguists prescribed rigorous and objective methods of study (Hook and Crowell, 1970:49). This concern with objectivity was heightened by the work of Charles Carpenter Fries (1952) during the first half of the twentieth century. Fries (1952) has referred to the earlier work on language study as "prescientific" and Francis (1964) has similarly described the new structural linguistics as a revolution in grammar comparable to the Copernican revolution in sun-centred astronomy (p. 71).

The principle of structural linguistics stresses a reliance upon empirical data without the application of the linguist's common sense or his reference to the structure of some other language. It also warns the linguist against referring to some mentalistic views of psychological theory (Bloomfield, 1933:37--38; Hook and Crowell, 1970:49--50; Grinder and Elgin, 1973:31).

This exclusive attention to available corpus in matters of linguistic analysis and description has been based partly upon the structural linguists' conception that each language is unique, and partly upon their desire to process the data and draw conclusions on them in a strictly scientific way.

The revolutionary character of the new scientific study of language was marked by changes both in methodology and in the number and nomenclature of parts of speech. Fries (1952) draws a sharp distinction in methodology between structural grammar and the

traditional type. In his own words:

The contrast between the older traditional procedure of grammatical analysis and the approach used here lies in the fact that the conventional analysis starts from the undifferentiated total meaning of an utterance and raises the question, "what names apply to various parts of this meaning?" whereas our analysis starts from a description of the formal devices that are present and the patterns that make them significant and arrives at the structural meanings as a result of the analysis (pp. 56—57).

He further postulates one of the basic principles guiding the structural analyst, namely, the assumption that all the structural signals in English are strictly formal matters that can be described in physical terms of forms, correlations of these forms, and arrangements of order (p. 58). The next important basic assumption enunciated by Fries (1952) with respect to grammatical analysis of sentences is that formal signals of structural meanings operate in a system (pp. 59—60). The concept of system means that the elements of form and arrangement possess signalling significance only if they are parts of patterns in a structural whole (p. 60).

As against the conventional classification of speech into eight parts, Fries (1952) drastically reduced the number of parts of speech which he called "form classes" from eight to four, assigning new names to them as well. These are: Class 1, Class 2, Class 3, and Class 4 form classes. These parts, he asserts, constitute the majority of the words in an English utterance. The classes given numbers by Fries refer, in general, to nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs. However, the numbered classes do not include precisely the same words as the traditional classes (Hook and Crowell, 1970:57).

Lees' (1974) comment on the main contribution of Bloomfieldian structuralism to the understanding of what language is all about is

that it replaced vague notional definitions of parts of speech by very precise, so-called "formal" definitions of word classes (p. 136). Hook and Crowell (1970) have discussed the three kinds of definition that can be employed to classify the parts of speech. One of these, used by the traditional grammarians, is a combination of meaning and the grammarian's intuition. Of the remaining two kinds of definition, the one used by Fries (1952) is the positional or syntactic approach whereby word classes are defined in terms of the position they occupy in English sentences. The other possibility is the inflectional or morphological definition in which classes are defined on the basis of the endings that words take (pp. 55—56).

Besides the three types of definition described by Hook and Crowell (1970) some other linguists have recommended the development of a general theory of language structure. A grammatical theory is necessary if a linguistic analyst or a descriptivist is to make useful and cogent statements concerning how a language works. Gleason (1961), for example, has suggested the setting up of a conceptual framework within which an investigator can work while he is seeking to understand the structure of a specific language (p. 440). Halliday *et al.* (1964) have proposed a theoretical model made up of four categories to account fully for the kind of patterning relating to the level of grammar. These categories include: class, system, unit, and structure (p. 31).

The category "class" is explained as any set of items having the same possibilities of operation in structure (p. 29). This, in effect, implies that the items constituting a class must belong to the same unit in order to maintain the same structural possibilities. For

instance, the class 'verbal group', itself a class of the unit 'group', comprises items that can function as 'predicator' in clause structure; the class 'noun', which belongs to the unit 'word' is that class of word operating as 'head' of a nominal group (p. 29). The classes referred to above may have any number of items in them; consequently, a choice has to be made from the total set of items in them. The class, therefore, governs what may be chosen from what may not be chosen (p. 30).

The question of choice presupposes the presence of more than one possibility in a set of items. It also implies that whichever item is chosen makes a difference. For, at a given place in structure, the language permits a choice among a small fixed set of possibilities which constitute the system (Halliday *et al.*, 1964:30). The sets of possibilities are referred to as 'terms' in the system. For example, in a particular structure of English one can identify where the choice is to be made among 'who', 'whose', 'what' and 'which'. These four terms form a system tied to a particular place in structure where they exclusively can occur (p. 30).

Halliday *et al.* (1964) define the 'unit' as the stretch of language that carries grammatical patterns (p. 25). These authors elaborate upon the fixed relationships existing among units in a grammatical pattern. In their own words:

Wherever a grammatical choice is made, there is a unit that carries that choice. It is a property of all languages that one can recognize units in their grammar, and that these units are built up one inside the other. However many units we recognize in the grammar of any given language, there is always a fixed relation among them: an occurrence of any unit is said to consist of one, or more than one, complex occurrence of the unit next below it (p. 25).

Recognizably, then, the English language has five units signaling its grammatical patterns. These are: sentence, clause, group, word and morpheme (Halliday *et al.*, 1964:25). But, of these five units, the sentence has remained a distinctively non-disorderable unit as compared with the smaller units. This means that if the order of sentences in a text is changed, the text loses its meaning, whereas the re-ordering of units below the sentence either yields impossible structures or results in change rather than a loss of meaning (p. 26). Hence, as contrasted with "some European languages, English makes considerable use of sequence as an exponent of structure" (p. 28).

Halliday *et al.* (1964) further postulate that the category 'structure' epitomizes all units in the grammar of a language minus the smallest which, definitionally, has no structure, because it is not made up of anything smaller that can be identified at the level of grammar (p. 28). Accordingly, English has sentence structures, clause structures, group structures, and word structures, whose elements have, as their types respectively, clauses, groups, words and morphemes. The morpheme itself has no structure since there is nothing below it in the grammar (p. 29).

These authors contend that the four theoretical categories can be applied to the analysis of any language. That means that the categories have universal applicability. Subsumed under the four theoretical categories are descriptive categories which belong to the descriptions of particular languages (p. 25). Descriptive categories are outgrowths of the underlying theoretical categories. For example, 'sentence' and 'clause' are instances of the category

of unit, 'verb' and 'noun' of the category of class, and 'subject' and 'complement' of the category of structure (p. 25).

Halliday *et al.* (1964) describe a linguistic form as a composite of the two levels, grammar and lexis. A description of a linguistic form involves a delineation of the meaningful internal patterns of language; that is, the way in which a language is internally structured to carry contrasts in meaning (p. 21). The problem confronting the descriptive linguist is one of recognizing and accounting for such places in the language as indicate a possibility of meaningful choice. Subsequently, he has to specify the range of available possibilities in each place. The range of possibilities available may be narrow or wide depending on whether the choices are to be made at the level of grammar or of lexis. At the grammatical level, the range of choice of possibilities is a small fixed one whereas at the lexical level there is a wide range of choice. Halliday *et al.* (1964) refer to these two types of choice respectively as 'closed' and 'open'; and relate the range of possibilities in a closed choice to a 'system' while that in an open choice is technically referred to as a 'set'.²

It would appear as if all choices to be made in language are obviously of one type or the other — that is, closed or open.

Halliday *et al.* (1964) have made it clear that although there is no

²Vide: Halliday, McIntosh and Stevens, *The Linguistic Sciences and Language Teaching*, 1964 (p. 23), for a fuller explication of the concepts of 'closed' and 'open' choices: part of the explanation is that 'grammar deals with closed system choices, which may be between items ('this/that', 'I/you/he/she/we/they') or between categories ('singular/plural, past/present/future'), lexis with open set choices, which are always between items ('chair/settee/bench/stool' etc.)."

clear distinction in language between grammar and lexis, linguists need to draw a distinction between them. Such a distinction is necessary to show how certain systems in complex interrelations, at one end of the scale, shade gradually into open sets in simple interrelations at the other (p. 23). This, in effect, means that the linguist needs different categories and relations to account effectively for grammatical and lexical patterns of language.

Following the search for a model for analyzing a linguistic form in English, Francis (1964) has proposed four important devices of form designed to signal structural meanings. These are: (1) word order, (2) function words, (3) inflections, and (4) formal contrasts (p. 78). By formal contrasts is meant an alteration in the form of a word to signal a change of function. The following examples illustrate the point: "the dog's friend arrived" and "the dog's friendly arrival" (p. 79). In this example, the difference lies in the alteration from "friend" to "friendly" which signals a change of function from subject to modifier. In the second pair of examples the alteration is in the change from the form "arrived" to the form "arrival" which signals a change of function from predicate to head-word in a noun-modifier group (p. 79). These examples illustrate inflectional, derivational, and morphological changes.

The structuralists' concern with the procedures of analysis and description beyond the phonological systems into the higher-order systems of morphology and syntax has led them toward formalizing the traditional imprecise notions of "parts of speech." The formalization — the division of words and phrases into noun, noun phrases, verbs,

adjectives, adverbs, and so on, was called "immediate constituent analysis" (Grinder and Elgin, 1973:37; Harris, 1951:332; Hook and Crowell, 1970:74). Basically, immediate constituent analysis means the breaking down of a sentence into its constituents (Langendoen, 1969:153). Thus, in the English sentence, "The rich man robbed the poor woman" (Hook and Crowell, 1970:71), there are two main parts, namely, subject and predicate which are its immediate constituents; each of these parts can be analyzed into its own constituents.

The significance of structural linguistics lies in the fact that it has provided an insight into the internal mechanics of a language. It has also unfolded the infinitely delicate system of relationships, balance, and interplay that constitutes the grammar of a language (Francis, 1964:83). By providing a more explicit and objective definition of parts of speech (Hook and Crowell, 1970), structural linguistics has come to supersede the vague and notional definitions of the traditional grammar (pp. 55—72). Francis (1964) has urged that scientific grammar be recognized as capable of helping immensely in the teaching of English, especially as a foreign language. He has also expressed the conviction that structural linguistics could be useful in improving the native speaker's proficiency in handling the structural devices of his own language (p. 83). That is, the peculiar accuracy and consistency of structural grammar can lead to an improvement in one's use of the set of formal patterns in which the words of a language are arranged.

Generative-transformational Grammar

The latest significant development in grammar to arrive on the linguistics scene is generative-transformational grammar. In the vanguard of this "new" grammar is Noam Chomsky (1957) whose theoretical views about grammar have since made an impact on the study of language.

Generative-transformational grammar pursues an aim which is different from that followed by the older schools of grammar, such as the school of structural linguistics. The aim of the structuralists has been to produce a systematic analysis of sentences in a corpus spoken or written by native speakers of English (Goodman, 1971:291). The transformationalist, on the other hand, has advanced beyond the level of analyzing the sentences of a corpus, some of which may be ungrammatical, toward formulating a theory of language to show how it is possible for speakers to generate grammatical sentences (Goodman, 1971:291). The transformationalist assumes that a speaker of a language makes use of a limited number of internalized rules (p. 291) which enable him to generate all the sentences he is capable of speaking.

Competence and Performance

In the attempt to concretize the abstract notion of a speaker's internalized rules of his language, the transformational grammarian has come up with a distinction between two aspects of a speaker's language production. These are: *competence* and *performance*. The former refers to the speaker's intuitive or subconscious knowledge of these internalized rules (Goodman, 1971:291; Langendoen, 1969:4; Thomas, 1965:6). The latter pertains to his use of these rules when

he makes a speech act.

It is the view of transformational grammarians that before one can explain a speaker's or writer's performance, the necessary first step is for him to explain the speaker's or the writer's competence. In other words, the analyst must specify what the rules are. Thus, a language teacher's professional training, for instance, should include courses in transformational grammar because, as Goodman (1971) has suggested, transformational grammar is a theory of competence, not a theory of performance (p. 291).

Thomas (1965) has explicated at length a child's development of some degree of linguistic competence. In his own words:

By the time a child is five or six, he has been exposed to a wide variety of linguistic experiences. He has heard hundreds of thousands of sentences, most of them well-formed but many of them not completely well-formed (such as, for example, those from his playmates). He has spoken thousands of sentences of his own . . . ; he has occasionally been corrected when he makes mistakes. On the basis of these and many other kinds of experiences, he has — in some fashion almost completely unknown to linguists and psychologists — constructed a grammar of his language that permits him to produce thousands of sentences that he has never, in fact, heard. In other words, every child somehow learns to make generalizations about language on the basis of his exposure to linguistic experiences of various kinds (p. 6).

Consistent with the aim of explaining the concept of linguistic competence, the transformational grammarian has formulated a theory of grammar which says that every sentence has a pronunciation and a meaning (Goodman, 1971:291). He has further hypothesized that each sentence spoken or written has an abstract, underlying grammatical structure, namely deep structure, which is a meaning-determiner, and a surface structure, which gives the sentence its pronunciation

(Hook and Crowell, 1970:101; Goodman, 1971:292).

The two components of deep structure are the lexicon and phrase structure. The lexicon is made up of all the words and morphemes in English. Each of these constituents is called a lexical item. The function of the lexicon is to supply information about each lexical item by specifying its grammatical classifications, its meanings, and its phonology. Goodman (1971) has stated that the lexicon of transformational grammar is a symbolic representation of a speaker's internal lexicon (p. 292) which is activated during a speech act in terms of the speaker's choice of words and morphemes.

Phrase structure, on the other hand, provides all the basic grammatical constituents such as noun phrase, verb phrase, noun, verb, and adjective; it also designates the relationships of these constituents to one another (Goodman, 1971). This breaking down of a sentence into its constituents is similar to the structuralists' concept of immediate constituent analysis (Hook and Crowell, 1970: 113). Thus, phrase-structure rules by means of which a sentence is split into its constituent elements relate the new grammar to the structural grammar.

The new grammar is called a generative grammar because it is made up of a system of rules that in some explicit and well-defined way assigns structural descriptions to sentences (Chomsky, 1965:8; Hook and Crowell, 1970:112). This, in actuality, means that a generative grammar makes use of rules or generalizations about language which allow a native speaker to evaluate the grammaticality of any novel sentence (Thomas, 1965:8). Grammaticality is considered to be one of the central concepts of the generative-transformational grammar.

A sentence is described as grammatical or well-formed, if the native speaker can say it as a normal unselfconscious part of his dialect (Slager and Major, 1973:411). This implies a reliance on the intuition of the native speaker. Thomas (1965) has suggested that relying on the native speaker's intuition is probably essential in studying language (p. 10). He views the theoretical basis of traditional grammar as solid and as identical to the basis of transformational grammar but points out a defect in traditional grammar, namely, its unawareness of certain linguistic facts which can be noticed in the way traditionalists applied their theories to practical problems (p. 10). For instance, their claim that every sentence has a subject is intuitively satisfying except that in their analysis of imperative sentences, traditionalists could not give an explicit account of the "understood" subject (Grinder and Elgin, 1973:78—79). Transformational grammar has clarified the intuitive element of the "understood" subject by means of a substitution rule which places a noun phrase in the "understood" position (Grinder and Elgin, 1973).

Rules of transformation operate upon deep structure sentences called kernel sentences (Hook and Crowell, 1970:137; Aurbach *et al.* 1969:15—20) turning them into surface structure. The resulting operations produce what are known as derived sentences. Some examples of derived sentences or transformations include the passive, the yes-no, the negative, and the "there insertion" transformations. Slager and Major (1973) have argued that only transformational grammar can handle sentence synonymy in English. They claim that certain transformations including (1) extraposition with 'it', (2) passive, (3) clausal and infinitive complementation (p. 416) are well fitted

for teaching pairs of sentences which share the same meaning in spite of their formal differences.

Generative-transformational grammar has its strengths and weaknesses. Hall (1964) and Hughes (1968) have remarked that it has pedagogical usefulness to foreign learners of English. By its system of rules it is possible for a foreigner to produce correct forms in a language of which he is not a native speaker (Hughes, 1968:54). Slager and Major (1973; likewise Hughes, 1968) consider transformational grammar to be extremely useful in explaining grammatical ambiguities. The weakness of transformational grammar lies in the fact that its rules operate only on the sentence level. Slager and Major (1973) consider this restriction to the sentence level inadequate to provide for a larger context that determines the native speaker's sense of the right sentence in the right place (p. 414).

Applied Linguistics

Linguistics interacts with other disciplines. Its interaction with education, for example, yields "applied linguistics." The influence of applied linguistics as an interdisciplinary approach to language learning is felt in certain areas of curriculum, including the teaching of foreign and second languages, reading, spelling, and grammar (Liles, 1972; Roberts, 1964). The application of linguistics to second language or foreign language learning has given rise to the crucial concepts of contrastive linguistics and error analysis.

Contrastive Linguistics

The concept of contrastive linguistics originated with Charles

C. Fries (1945) but was later developed by Lado (1957) into a full-fledged theory of teaching, testing, textbook writing, evaluating and preparing supplementary materials for the teaching of English as a foreign language. Fries hypothesized that in teaching and learning English as a foreign language:

. . . the most efficient materials are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner (p. 9).

Following this assumption, Lado (1957) made a somewhat more ambitious hypothesis that it is possible to predict and describe the patterns that will cause difficulty through a systematic comparison of the language and culture of both the foreign and native languages of the student (p. vii).

The domain of contrastive linguistics actively deals with interlingual interference; that is, the influence of the learner's first language upon his second language acquisition. But interlingual phenomena seem to be more acute in the phonological (Scovel, 1976:6) component of languages in contact (Weinreich, 1970). A fairly elaborate literature in which scholars have criticized the predictive demands of contrastive linguistics on the foreign or second language teacher is extant. The present study does not intend to go into the details of such critical views. However, the consensus among critics of contrastive linguistics seems to be that focusing on interlingual interference alone is not enough because there are many other sources of errors besides mother tongue interference (Wardhaugh, 1974:11—19; Richards, 1974:32—53; Richards and Sampson, 1974:3—18).

Error Analysis

The concept of error analysis seeks to focus on the learner himself as generator of the grammar of his sentences in the new language (Richards and Sampson, 1974:5). The learner's self-generated grammar of his second language has, in recent years, given rise to a promising field of research in the area of second language learning. Scholars in the fields of applied linguistics and psycholinguistics have devised varying terminological labels for describing cause, source, and significance of errors (Jain, 1974). Prominent among such terms are: 'error analysis', 'idiosyncratic dialects' (Corder, 1974); 'language transfer or interference'. 'performance errors', 'intra-lingual interference' (Richards, 1974, 1970); 'fossilization', 'overgeneralization', 'interlanguage' (Selinker, 1974); 'markers of transitional competence' (Richards, 1974); and 'approximative systems' (Nemser, 1974) to mention just a few.

Cohen's (1975) seven-point account of causes for a learner's errors in learning a second language may be regarded as a fair summary of the cause, source, and significance of errors which available literature on second language acquisition has discussed. The seven broad causes are:

- (1) the learner's first language (L1);
- (2) inherently confusing aspects of the second language;
- (3) errors unintentionally promoted by the teacher and/or the course materials;
- (4) 'errors' which, though nonstandard forms, are quite acceptable features of linguistic systems at variance with English;

- (5) errors due to the learner's self-devised second language acquisition strategies;
- (6) errors which are incorrect realizations of forms the student has learned, and
- (7) errors of indeterminate source.

For the purpose of the present investigation, Cohen's (1975) seven-point category of errors provides a model for examining available related studies in error analysis and/or contrastive linguistics.

L1-based Errors

L1-based errors are said to appear because of direct influence from the learner's first language (Cohen, 1975:107). Specifically, an L1-based error in lexis or syntax becomes noticeable as a result of the learner's transfer of a lexical item or word-order arrangement of his first language into his second language. Such errors have been given various labels including Weinreich's (1970) "interference," Richard's (1974) "interlingual errors," and Selinker's (1974) "language transfer."

Two studies undertaken by Nigerian teachers of English with subjects randomly selected from secondary schools situated in the Yoruba-speaking section of Nigeria (Kwa group) have provided examples of L1-based errors. Olu-Tomori's (1971) descriptive study of "syntactic structures in Form V compositions" has indicated that of the 666 errors which appeared in the compositions, 11 were those of L1-based nominal items. For example, in the sentence 'My mothers are very kind' (p. 213), the source of the pluralization of the morpheme, mother, is explained as due to the Yoruba concept of mother which includes

aunts, cousins, half-sisters, and intimate female friends who are old enough to be mothers (p. 213). Another instance of L1-based error noticeable in Olu-Tomori's study is that of a syntactic device misapplied. A sentence illustrating this point in that study is given as 'Cold caught me last Saturday' (p. 213). This type of error exemplifies interference of a direct translation type from Yoruba (L1) sentence structure into English syntax where the meaning of the sentence structure sounds intuitively unusual. The English equivalent of 'Cold caught me last Saturday' would be 'I caught a cold last Saturday' (p. 213). Also, in the category labelled 'syntactic-morphological errors' (p. 214), Olu-Tomori (1971) has shown that L1-based interference accounts for the subjects' omission of such crucial exponents of sentence structure as verbs, pronouns, prepositions, and articles (p. 214). The source of the omission of a verb in the sentence "Some christians always happy on Sundays" (p. 214) reflects omission of the verb *be* by Nigerians of lower level of ability in English (p. 215). Thus, in Yoruba, the morpheme, 'happy', is accepted as a verb that needs no copula for its completeness. An omission of a pronoun in an English sentence structure by Yoruba-speaking Nigerians is due to a dissimilarity in the syntax of the two languages. For example, the Yoruba equivalent for the English sentence 'He is my friend' (p. 215) is 'Friend my is' (Olu-Tomori, 1971:215). In the Yoruba version, the pronoun, 'he', has been omitted. This type of error appears in the composition of one of the subjects in the structure 'When it is 4 p.m.; resting is over and is the time for games' (Olu-Tomori, 1971:215).

Bamgbose (1971) has cited other examples of L1-based errors. One of these is rooted in the 'you' distinction. Among the Yoruba-speaking Nigerians (Kwa group), the use of the morpheme 'you' in its singular and plural forms is determined by such considerations as the user's knowledge of the referent's status, age, and his familiarity with the referent (p. 45). This, in effect, implies that if a nominal 'you' in a subject position refers to a child, the accompanying verb *be* would be singular in form. Thus, "You is a child" would appear to be an appropriate sentence structure in Yoruba.

Another type of L1-based error given by Bamgbose (1971) is connected with choice of a lexical item which is a literal translation of a Yoruba word into English. Thus, in the sentence 'I hear the smell' (p. 47), the lexical item 'hear' is a literal translation of Yoruba 'gbo' meaning 'I hear' (p. 47).

Greenland (1968) analyzed the errors which appeared in the written English composition of seventy-four Form I pupils of Makerere College, Uganda. One of the findings of that study was that interference between Bantu (L1) and English led to spelling errors in such words as 'rocked' for 'locked'; 'correcting' for 'collecting' (p. 201). Greenland (1968) has attributed the source of these spelling errors to the interchangeability of the consonants 'r' and 'l' which characterizes most Bantu languages (p. 201).

Duskova (1969) analyzed and classified errors made in written English by a homogeneous sample of fifty Czech adult post-graduate students. Among the errors caused by interference from Czech (L1) were those of word order and sentence structure, some misuses of prepositions due to interference of the corresponding prepositional

phrases (p. 18), relativization introduced with 'which' instead of with 'who', and some morphological errors. Besides interference from Czech, Duskova (1969) also noticed minor interference from previously learnt German and French. Duskova (1969) remarked that interference from the mother tongue was only one of many other causes of errors.

Politzer and Ramirez (1973) analyzed errors present in actual speech samples of sixty-seven Mexican-American children who attended a monolingual elementary school and samples of fifty-nine Mexican-American children of a bilingual elementary school. Some of the findings of their study were that interference from Spanish was one of the major causes of errors noticeably in the subjects' use of the simple verb form for the past tense of regular verbs, infinitive rather than the gerund for nominalization, redundant object pronouns, the definite article for the possessive, confused use of prepositions, confusion in word order ("object - subject - verb construction"), uncertainty about the use of 'to' in verb plus verb constructions, and also lexical errors (p. 59).

Grauberg's (1971) analysis of errors in German of one hundred and ninety-three first year university students has revealed that interference from English into German appeared in seventy-one out of one hundred and ninety-three errors. Also, of the seventy-one errors observed, twenty occurred on the syntactic level. Grauberg (1971) has remarked that interference errors were most clearly marked in the lexical field (p. 261).

Intralingual Errors

Some errors have been described as intralingual (Richards, 1974).

These are errors made by second language learners due to inherently confusing aspects of the second language (Cohen, 1975:108). Duskova (1969) discovered that the actual source of most errors was intra-lingual-interference from the other terms of the English system (p. 23). For example, most Czech learners of English have great difficulty with modal verbs. At the syntactic level, some of the errors may be traced to interference between English forms such as confusion of anticipatory 'it' and 'there' (p. 23). A few examples illustrating syntactic errors of the anticipatory type cited in Duskova's (1969) study are: "There was not my first stay abroad," and "They are/it is many other points to be solved" (p. 23).

George (1972) has treated, at length, the concept of redundancy as a characteristic feature of English. Both on the morphological and syntactical levels, the English language contains redundant features. On the morphological level, redundancy is evident both in the inflections in English nouns and verbs and in the concepts behind them. Illustratively, the addition of third person singular morpheme (-s) to signal subject-verb agreement, and of (-ed) as past tense morpheme of regular verbs, to the verb stem are confusing. All such inflections seem redundant to Asian learners of English because most Asian languages use the stem forms of nouns and verbs in all contexts (pp. 13—14). Also, absence of the forms of the verb *be* in many Asian languages gives rise to errors involving the use of these forms in sentences corresponding to the type 'He is kind' (p. 13). An Asian learner of English who omits any form of the verb *be* in an English sentence does so because it appears to him to be redundant. An example of redundancy on the syntactic level cited by

George (1972) is that of subject-auxiliary inversion in verbal questions (p. 13).

Taylor (1975) analyzed errors arising from the use of the auxiliary (Aux) and the verb phrase (VP) present in the written corpus of twenty speakers of Latin American Spanish who were learning English as their second language. The subjects were selected from elementary and intermediate English classes at the English Language Institute of the University of Michigan.

The errors treated under five categories — namely: overgeneralization, transfer, translation, indeterminate origin, and those labelled 'not considered' (pp. 61—62), were also taxonomized. The taxonomy of overgeneralization errors covered the following segments:³

- (1) redundant auxiliary insertions
- (2) auxiliary substitutions
- (3) incorrect placement of negative marker
- (4) incorrect form of main verb following an auxiliary
- (5) errors in the use of the infinitive marker 'to'
- (6) question-inversion errors
- (7) verb tense errors, and
- (8) verb number errors (pp. 67—68).

Three sentences cited to illustrate three types of overgeneralizations are: 'He study there every night'; 'Did they studied last night?'; and 'Does she can cook well?' (Taylor, 1975:66). In the

³Vide: B.P. Taylor, "The Use of Overgeneralization and Transfer Learning Strategies by Elementary and Intermediate University Students of ESL," in *TESOL*, '75; *New Directions* (Appendix: pp. 67—69) for details of errors taxonomized.

first sentence, the student has demonstrated that his rule for present tense formation involves using a zero-morpheme to mark number for all persons (p. 66). In the production of the second sentence, the student has indicated what his rule says about a sentence which refers to the past, namely, all verbs must be in the past. The third sentence informs the reader that the student's rule for question formation is that every question needs the auxiliary 'do' for its completeness.

Taylor's (1975) findings have indicated that a large number of errors made by second language learners can be explained only within the framework which includes interference from the target language itself. Overgeneralization errors which stem from the target language have been explained as attempts by the learner to simplify the linguistic complexities peculiar to the target language. Simplification suggests that the learner's rules do not account for exceptions, that is, they regularize the grammar of the language (Taylor, 1975:65; Richards, 1975:74; George, 1972).

Richards and Sampson (1974) have explained the cause of the learners' generalizations as the outgrowth of the learners' partial exposure to the target language (p. 6). Included among errors due to partial exposure are: ignorance of rule restrictions, incomplete application of rules, overgeneralization, and semantic errors (Richards and Sampson, 1974:6).

Selinker (1975) has illustrated an error of overgeneralization with the sentence "What did he intended to say?" (p. 121) in which the producer has extended the past tense morpheme -ed in 'intended' to an environment where he thinks it logically belongs, but where it

is inappropriate.

*Errors Unintentionally Induced by the Teacher
and/or the Course Materials*

Some of the errors made by foreign or second language learners are said to be unintentionally promoted or induced by the teacher and/or the course materials (Cohen, 1975:108; Stensen, 1974:54). George (1972) has referred to this type of errors as errors of interference through analogy and cross association. The teacher's unintended contribution to the error of analogy is through the sequencing and presentation of his course materials. For example, if the teacher has taught simple present statement, simple present question, and simple past statement forms in succession (p. 149), the -ed inflection in the learner's production: "Did you mended it?" (p. 149) is analogically justified. The learner's rationale seems to be that since in English one needs a question marker to signal a 'question' and a past marker to indicate the tense 'past', then one is justified in bringing together the question marker 'Did' and the past tense morpheme (-ed) to indicate a question relating to the past. Only a reordering of the teaching can prevent the occurrence of this type of error.

Cross associational errors are fostered by teachers and teaching materials through sequential presentation of constructions which could be taught separately. For example: a course design which progressively presents the two constructions 'This book is green; it is a green book' (p. 155) has unintentionally induced the learner's cross associational errors appearing in the forms: "This book is a green, it is green book" (George, 1972:155).

Selinker (1974) has provided an example of errors due to a transfer-of-training. The indiscriminate use of the morpheme 'he' for both sexes noticeable among Serbo-Croatian speakers (p. 121) is a regular phenomenon which is said to be directly due to transfer-of-training. The source of this type of error has been traced to the exclusive appearance of 'he' both in the textbooks and in teachers' presentation of drills. This absence of the he/she distinction is evident in the speech and writing of Serbo-Croatians who are well above the age of eighteen.

Richards (1974) has traced the source of a class of developmental errors deriving from the learner's faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language to poor gradation of teaching items, course design, and contrastive-based teaching (pp. 178—181). For instance, the distinction between the simple present tense in English and the present progressive forms has frequently been unmarked and confused. Instead of the use of the simple present tense form in English to describe actions, events, sequences taking place contemporaneously or habitually, and the present progressive tense forms to describe a single event selected from a sequence, teachers present the present progressive tense forms to express habitual and contemporaneous sequences of events and actions.

Also, designers of course materials based on contrastive analysis concentrate on problem spots to the extent that not enough attention is focused on the structure of the second or foreign language as a whole. The rationale underlying such undue concentration of attention on problem areas of L2 relative to L1 is that the progressive tense forms do not exist in the learners' L1.

Stensen (1974) analyzed data gathered from adult English classes at the Institut Borguiba des Langues Vivantes in Tunis, Tunisia, and from high school students in Madhia, Tunisia. The analysis has revealed that some errors in lexis and grammatical structure made by the students were teacher-induced. For instance, defining the lexical item 'worship' as a general word for 'pray' led to the students' error in "worshipping to God" (p. 54). Stensen (1974) has suggested that a teacher may inadvertently mislead students by the way he defines a lexical item, or by the order in which he presents material (p. 54).

Errors of Indeterminate Source

Some errors which appear in compositions written by second language learners defy classification with regard to their source (Olu-Tomori, 1971; Taylor, 1975; Cohen, 1975; Dulay and Burt, 1974). In Olu-Tomori's (1971) error analysis of Form V compositions there were nineteen instances of errors classified as 'mazes' or unintelligible collocations (p. 212). The two examples of this class of error cited in the study are: 'the fate on the deciding merry', and 'atop the oscillating freedom' (p. 214). These structures are both semantically and grammatically meaningless and their source is indeterminate. The structures are of an indeterminate source in the sense that they reflect neither L1-interference nor L2-acquisition strategy. Dulay and Burt (1974) have referred to this class of error as "unique goofs" (p. 115). The term 'goof', however, signifies an aberrant syntactic structure.

Psychology and Child Language Acquisition

Applied linguistics and a few other inter-disciplinary studies are useful sources of information to language teachers. For example, the separate domains of linguistics and psychology tend to form a merger in the area of child language acquisition. A fair knowledge of both is a desideratum for teachers of first and second languages. Strevens (1968), for instance, has suggested that insights from empirical studies of child language acquisition, provided by psychology, could be of great help to language teachers.

Some of the available psychologically-oriented studies have already provided some useful information about stages through which a child acquires his first language. Noticeably, the studies by Bloom (1970), Cazden (1972), and Brown (1973) have demonstrated that their subjects who were acquiring English as their first language made developmental errors of overgeneralization, omission, or reduction of obligatory choices in lexis, morphology and syntax. Cazden (1972) has provided examples of noun and verb inflections which were overgeneralized by the subjects — Adam, Eve, and Sarah. A few citations of such overgeneralizations include: "sheeps, mans, childs, mens, coffees, milks, etc." (p. 44) — all of which are misapplied plural inflections of nouns. The same children also overgeneralized possessive inflections such as in "mines" (mine). Through the addition of the past tense morpheme (-ed) to irregular verbs, the subjects overgeneralized verb inflections resulting in such ill-formed morphemes as "comed," "drinked," "falled," etc. (p. 44). Brown's (1973) study has indicated that at "Stage 1" level — a level similar to

Piaget's (1955) sensori-motor intelligence level — the speeches of Adam, Eve, and Sarah were 'telegraphic' (p. 243) on the ground that they consisted of content words and lacked function words ("functors"). Functors are structural words. The development, at Stage II (Brown, 1973) of the first signs of noun and verb inflections, and of a few structural words such as articles, spatial prepositions, the copula and auxiliary *be* forms (p. 398) indicates that the children's grammar was developmentally unfit to handle the arbitrary and intricate rules of adult grammar.

With respect to the development of English syntax, Brown (1973)⁴ has pointed out that his subjects' use of the English word order approached perfection only later (at "Stage V or beyond") (p. 244). Two other problematic areas of English syntax which have been found to be difficult to first learners are the Wh- questions and negation (Cazden, 1972). The difficulty here is one of the learners not being able to perform the necessary syntactical transformations. These include the addition of the auxiliary 'do' or the inversion of modals and auxiliaries in declarative sentences which are obligatory operations for the production of question sentences.

The fact that learners of English as their first language do have developmental linguistic problems to contend with, and that, in normal children, these problems gradually disappear with age tends to lend support to Piaget's (1955) contention that the child's use of language is determined by the developmental level of his cognitive structure. De-Zwart (1969) has succinctly echoed Piaget's developmental theory relating to language:

⁴Bloom, Cazden, Brown, Piaget and De Zwart do not support the concept of transformational grammar.

. . . a theory of the acquisition of language would have to be based on a theory of the developmental changes in the knower-symbolization-known relationship: in other words, on genetic epistemology (p. 326).

This assumption — applied to children learning English as their second language — has produced results which are developmentally analogous to the stages noticed in studies of English-as-first-language learners. Children learning English as their second language use almost the same strategies and make almost the same morphological, inflectional and structural errors as their counterparts in the first-language position. For example, Ravem (1974) made a longitudinal study of the acquisition of Wh- questions in English by his Norwegian-speaking children. He discovered that his children — Rune and Reidun — progressed through the same developmental stages as did Brown's (1973) subjects — Adam, Eve, and Sarah. Ravem's children used such structures as "What you eating? What he's doing? Why we not live in Scotland? Why you can't — why you couldn't take it here?" (pp. 159—161). Similarly, Milon's (1974) longitudinal study, in Hawaii, of the acquisition of English negation by Ken, a Japanese-speaking child, has shown that Ken made the same developmental errors in negation structures as Brown's (1973) subjects.

The implication of these findings to the teacher of second language learners seems to be that developmental errors are inevitable and must be regarded as an integral part of the learning process. Cook (1969) has provided what could be regarded as a neat summary of this problem. He says:

Tested by adult competence, the child's sentences will contain errors. Similarly, tested by native competence, the second language learner's sentences will contain errors. While in the theory of first language acquisition . . . 'errors' are an integral part of the process and show what the child's interim grammar does not yet include, in second language teaching it is usually thought that errors are extremely harmful (p. 210).

Summary

The review of the relevant literature about grammatical analysis, description, and classification, and, specifically, of problems of second language acquisition has spotlighted the following salient points:

1. A grammar of a language examines the internal relationships existing within a linguistic form which contribute meaning to an utterance or a written form of that language.
2. A grammatical analyst of a corpus must take cognizance of the linguistic patterning of class, system, unit, and structure. These four theoretical categories are applicable to analysis of any language.
3. Analysis of a particular language, like English, requires the use of descriptive categories such as sentence, clause, verb, noun, subject, complement; and these descriptive categories are outgrowths of the four underlying theoretical categories.
4. In describing a linguistic form, a descriptivist must draw an arbitrary boundary between grammar and lexis in order to account fully for places where 'closed' and 'open' choices are permissible.
5. Structural meanings in English are signalled by word order,

inflections, function words and formal contrasts.

6. A speaker of a language makes use of a limited number of internalized rules which enable him to generate all the sentences he is capable of speaking.
7. Generative-transformational grammar distinguishes between two aspects of a speaker's language production: competence and performance. The former refers to the speaker's knowledge of his hypothetical 'internalized' rules; the latter pertains to his use of these rules when he makes a speech act or its written counterpart.
8. Every child develops some degree of linguistic competence which enables him to make generalizations about language on the basis of his exposure to linguistic experiences of various kinds.
9. Contrastive linguistics and error analysis are applications of insights derived from linguistics. The domain of contrastive linguistics is the investigation of interference problems carried over from the learner's first language into his second language. Error analysis, on the contrary, examines the learner's errors from the perspective of the learner's self-made rules.
10. There are more sources of errors of second language acquisition than can be adequately accounted for by L1-interference hypothesis.
11. Almost all learners of English as their second language are vulnerable to the same developmental errors as those made by children learning English as their first language.

12. Developmental 'errors' common among children learning English as their first language (L1) are regarded as an integral part of the learning process and they are indicators of what the child's interim grammar does not provide for; in the same vein, 'errors' made by second language learners should be regarded as being developmentally concomitant and should, therefore, not constitute a cause for alarm.

CHAPTER III

DESIGN AND PROCEDURES

The problem which the present study was designed to solve was to ascertain the nature, extent, and frequency of errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and structural patterns observable in the English compositions written by Nigerian secondary school pupils in Forms III and V.

Description of the Sample

The subjects whose written compositions have been analyzed in this study came from seven secondary schools in the Cross River State of Nigeria. Six of these schools are grammar schools; the seventh is a secondary commercial school. Of the six grammar schools, two are exclusively for boys, one for girls, and three are mixed (co-ed). The secondary commercial school is exclusively for girls. The distribution of these schools is shown in Table 1.

These schools were selected from a total possible sample on the basis of stratification by sex, type, linguistic group and location.⁵ Type of school refers to secondary grammar and secondary commercial school. Linguistic group refers to the subgroups within the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo. Location refers to distribution in terms of city-based and rural-based schools.

⁵Vide: G.C. Helmstadter, *Research Concepts in Human Behavior*, Appleton-Century Crofts, New York, 1970 (p. 338) for "Special Methods and Techniques — Stratified Sampling."

TABLE 1. DISTRIBUTION OF SCHOOLS FOR COLLECTION OF DATA †

SECONDARY GRAMMAR SCHOOLS					SECONDARY COMMERCIAL SCHOOL						
Form	Boys	Girls	Mixed	Total	No. of Students	Boys	Girls	Mixed	Total	No. of Students	
III	2	1	3	6	357	-	1	-	1	59	
V	2	1	3	6	276	-	1	-	1	159	
TOTAL					633	TOTAL					218
GRAND TOTAL 851											

†The actual number of compositions written by Form III was 416 and by Form V, 435 (total 851). That is, some pupils in both Forms wrote on more than one topic.

Procedures in Collecting Data

Letters were mailed to the Principals and two Form Instructors of each of the seven schools requesting permission to administer composition topics, which accompanied the letters, to their students in Forms III and V. The choice of these two Forms was based on the following rationale: a student who has completed his/her Form III course work but cannot go further, either because of lack of funds or scholarship, is eligible to leave school with a Form III certificate with which he/she seeks a low level job in a mercantile house or in the lowest cadre of the civil service. Form V is the lower upper limit of the Nigerian secondary school system. It is the level at which students are prepared for a competitive external examination, the West African School Certificate (WASC), set and marked by the West African Examinations Council (WAEC).

The six composition topics set for Forms III and V students in this study reflect four of the major types of 'essays', namely: narrative, descriptive, argumentative and expository, as specified in the West African School Certificate Examinations syllabus.⁶ The topics set for these Forms were:

1. The editor of your school magazine has asked you to contribute an article to the publication. Write an article entitled: "My Two Favourite Subjects in School."

This topic was intended to test what skills the writer has in

⁶ Vide: *The West African Examinations Council: Regulations And Syllabuses For The Joint Examinations For The School Certificate And General Certificate of Education*, 1974. (pp. 86-91).

giving information in a clear and descriptive style. It is both descriptive and expository.

2. A visitor to your country has come to know that there are only two seasons: the wet and dry. Develop an argument to show him why you like the dry season better than the wet one.

This topic was designed to test the writer's skills in argument.

3. Your local newspaper has reported a fire incident which had occurred in your town last April. Retell the story about how the fire broke out, what goods and personal property were destroyed, and how the fire was finally put out.

This topic required narration and description. It was intended to find out how well the writer could deal with the English perfective tense.

4. Nigeria has just celebrated the Fifteenth Anniversary of her Independence. You have the pleasant task of making comments on those things which you felt made this year's National Day Celebration a success. Write a letter communicating your experiences to your Ghanaian friend.

This topic was set to test the writer's narrative, descriptive, and expository skills. Letter writing is examined at the West African School Certificate examinations.

5. Describe the celebration of a traditional festival in your home town.

This was also a descriptive 'essay' topic. It was intended to find out the extent of the writer's repertoire of lexical items.

6. Give your impressions about possible causes of student unrest in Nigerian universities.

This topic was meant to develop argument in the writer. It was also intended to indicate how well the writer was able to handle the 'if construction' in English.

These topics followed the progression from easy to difficult. For example, the first topic was considered to be within the scope of the ability of Form III students while the sixth topic was considered to be more suitable for Form V students.

Time allowed for the composition was forty minutes. The investigator requested administrators of the topics to observe this time limit by allowing the students to write the composition during the normal forty-minute class period for English language.

Random Sampling of Data Received

The accessible sample received from the seven secondary schools selected from the Cross River State of Nigeria contained a total of 851 compositions (see Table 1). This sample size was considered to be too large for an efficient analysis. In order, therefore, to obtain a fairly workable and, at the same time, a representative sample of 55 compositions, the investigator used a simple random sample technique recommended by Helmstadter (1970).⁷ The simple randomized sample size is shown in Table 2. By this process, 20 of the 55 random papers represent the less numerous Form III pupils of the total sample received, and 35 the more numerous Form V pupils. Table 2 shows a classification of the randomly selected 55

⁷Vide: G.C. Helmstadter, *Research Concepts In Human Behavior*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1970 (pp. 337-338). "Simple Random Sample" permits "each element of the population to have an equal and an independent chance of being included in the sample."

TABLE 2. SIMPLE RANDOMIZED SAMPLE

Paper ID	Form	School	Composition Topic	No. of Words Written
UK 050	V	UKANA	2	333
089	"	"	5	339
099	"	"	2	324
OA 173	"	OKU-ABAK	2	421
125	"	"	2	523
134	"	"	5	403
MB 083	"	MBIAKONG	2	91
084	"	"	5	489
087	"	"	1	373
EU 152	"	ENYONG-UYO	2	351
090	"	"	3	368
083	"	"	3	331
085	"	"	4	406
080	"	"	3	479
149	"	"	6	406
150	"	"	2	370
148	"	"	6	354
067	"	"	6	494
066	"	"	6	677
082	"	"	3	421
084	"	"	3	657
088	"	"	3	482
142	"	"	3	408
072	"	"	4	263
137	"	"	6	572
MB 080	"	MBIAKONG	3	583
ITK 053	"	ITAK	2	425
061	"	"	3	480
OA 140	"	OKU-ABAK	5	714
164	"	"	3	500

(Cont'd)

Paper ID	Form	School	Composition Topic	No. of Words Written
EU 112	V	ENYONG-UYO	4	315
107	"	"	4	248
126	"	"	4	318
128	"	"	2	449
ITK 076	"	ITAK	3	348
<u>TOTAL = 35</u>				<u>TOTAL = 14,715</u>
WI 024	III	WAPI	5	160
OA 047	"	OKU-ABAK	5	353
005	"	"	3	389
037	"	"	5	361
WI 012	"	WAPI	5	276
023	"	"	5	267
OA 091	"	OKU-ABAK	4	265
054	"	"	2	302
059	"	"	2	397
MB 047	"	MBIAKONG	5	149
042	"	"	3	332
EU 024	"	ENYONG-UYO	5	339
036	"	"	5	283
003	"	"	5	280
IA 014	"	IKOT ATAKU	2	218
026	"	"	2	327
MB 031	"	MBIAKONG	2	237
ITK 022	"	ITAK	4	513
026	"	"	3	235
OA 010	"	OKU-ABAK	1	281
<u>TOTAL = 20</u>				<u>TOTAL = 5,964</u>

compositions. The classification reflects the subjects' assigned identification code for randomization purposes (Paper 1D), Form, School, choice of composition topic, and the number of words they each wrote. Table 3 shows the total number of subjects, type of school, and composition topics.

Analysis of Error Procedures

Included as part of the design of this study was the use of judgment.⁸ To make an efficient use of the device of judgment it was considered necessary to tap the intuitive faculty of four native speakers of English as a first language. Part of the rationale for the use of these four native speakers of English was that their intuitive power would be of advantage in detecting any anomalies in a grammatically well-formed but semantically useless string of morphemes that might appear in the subjects' compositions. Another reason for using the four judges was the fact that they are also professionally trained teachers of English in Alberta high schools, thus representing a superior level of competence in the standard English of a major Anglophone culture, presumably approximating about as closely as possible what might be identified as an "international standard English" to which Nigerian students of English might aspire.

⁸Vide: D.T. Langendoen, *The Study of Syntax*. Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., New York, 1969 (pp. 3-4; 6-16). Langendoen defines linguistic intuition as a valuable judgment by means of which a fluent speaker of English is able to decide "whether or not a particular linguistic object is or is not an English sentence, that is, whether or not it is grammatical in English." The judges were the control group.

TABLE 3. COMPOSITION TOPICS

COMPOSITION TOPICS	SECONDARY SCHOOL						SECONDARY COMMERCIAL							
	Itak Form III	Ikot Ataku Form III	Mbiakong Form III	Oku-Abak Form III	Ukana Form III	Wapi Form III	Enyong-Uyo Form III	TOTAL						
COMPOSITION TOPICS	Form III	Form III	Form III	Form III	Form III	Form III	Form III	Form III						
1. My two favourite subjects in school	7	11	24	7	20	6	10	12	11	--	83	29		
2. Why I like the dry season better than the wet one	15	10	10	6	37	16	6	19	--	--	27	78	96	
3. The story of a fire incident in my town (retold)	15	7	14	7	29	17	2	16	--	--	52	67	106	
4. A letter to my Ghanaian friend commenting on what made Nigeria's Fifteenth Independence Anniversary Celebration a success	3	1	2	1	7	1	1	3	--	--	26	14	31	
5. The celebration of a traditional festival in my hometown	11	6	18	3	23	46	15	24	52	27	48	--	173	111
6. My impressions of possible causes of student unrest in Nigerian universities	--	--	--	--	--	4	1	4	--	--	54	1	62	
TOTAL												416	435	

The procedures for engaging the four judges in this study began with a marking practice in which each of the judges was given a photocopied version of the same composition written by one of the subjects in Form V. Then the investigator asked the judges to respond to the following question in marking the script:

Question

If these English compositions were written by your students in grades nine and eleven for publication in your school magazine, and you, as the English language instructor, were required to read them before they went to the editor, what corrections would you suggest in order to make the compositions acceptable to the editor?

The investigator's role was supervisory.⁹ He examined each marker's judgment of the quality of the script given him/her. The objective of the marking practice was to enable the researcher to establish inter-marker reliability.

The results of the marking practice (Table 4) showed that all the four raters attained what appeared to be a satisfactory degree of concurrence in their identification of type and frequency of errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and sentence structure which occurred in the composition.

⁹Vide: G.C. Helmstadter, *Research Concepts In Human Behavior*, Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1970 (p. 381). Helmstadter suggests that the pilot use of raters' judgment be executed under supervision and that the results of the practice ratings be discussed to develop a uniform standard among the judges.

TABLE 4. RESULTS OF THE MARKING PRACTICE

Errors and Frequency of Occurrence	Marker				Percentage†	
	A	B	C	D	Congruence	Incongruence
1. Wordy	1	2	-	-	--	50
2. Modification	2	-	-	-	--	25
3. Redundant	2	3	-	-	--	50
4. Agreement	2	1	-	-	--	50
5. Tense	2	2	2	2	100	--
6. Fragment	1	1	1	-	75	--
7. Pronoun	5	2	2	2	100	--
8. Inflection- Noun No.	1	-	-	-	--	25
9. Wrong word	3	3	3	3	100	--
10. Maze	2	1	2	1	100	--
11. Imprecise word	3	3	3	3	100	--
12. Repetition	1	1	-	-	--	50
13. Article	1	2	2	1	100	--
14. Omission	2	-	3	2	75	--

†Errors computed as percentage of congruence were those identified as such by three of the four judges; those identified by less than three judges were computed as percentage of incongruence. Disparity of frequency of occurrence of the errors identified was not considered in the computation.

Convinced that the judges had shown inter-marking reliability, the investigator assigned the randomly selected 55 compositions to each of them. The judges were further instructed to return their marked compositions to the investigator in three weeks' time.

The investigator felt that for a thorough marking of the scripts to be achieved, an earlier deadline should be avoided. Moreover, he considered the time limit of three weeks long enough to prevent unnecessary hurry and fatigue which could lead to judgmental errors and unreliability of results.

Error Identification and Judgment

The errors analyzed and categorized in this study were obtained from the pooling of the results of the four judges.¹⁰ The procedure adopted was to look for agreement in error identification among at least three of the four judges and to accept the majority judgment as valid.

A Framework for Error Classification

A researcher in the field of English as a second language does not need to work in isolation. He needs the guidance afforded by studies made in his field by other researchers in other parts of the world. For instance, in selecting a schema for his error analysis and categorization the present researcher has been guided by his

¹⁰Vide: G.C. Helmstadter, *Research Concepts In Human Behavior*. Appleton-Century-Crofts, New York, 1970 (pp. 381-382). Helmstadter has suggested that "the reliability of ratings can be greatly improved by a pooling of the results from several judges who have made their ratings independently." Following such a procedure tends to "cancel out the individual errors and biases" (see Appendix C).

reference to studies by three researchers, namely: Lukendakenda (1975), Taylor (1975), and Cohen (1975).

In his analysis of errors in the written English Compositions of Tanzanian students in Forms II and IV, Lukendakenda (1975) devised a four-point classification system consisting of Morphology, Syntax, Lexis, and Sentence Structure. He further divided the four major categories into twenty-eight subcategories. Twenty-seven of these subcategories shown in the Error Recording Sheet (Appendix C) have been modified and adapted to the present study.

The modified version of Lukendakenda's (1975) classification system has been adapted to the present study partly because that researcher's schema has, to a large extent, corresponded to the specifications of Section B of the West African School Certificate Syllabus (1974:86-91), and partly because it would be senseless to reject a schema used in a study closely related to the present one.

Section B of the West African School Certificate Syllabus deals with the concepts of Lexis and Structure. Subsumed under structure are: inflection, derivation, phrase, clause, sentence and function words, etc.¹¹

Besides the reference made to Lukendakenda's (1975) study for schematic reasons, the studies by Cohen (1975) and Taylor (1975) were also found useful to some extent. From Cohen's (1975) seven-point

¹¹Vide: *The West African Examinations Council: Regulations And Syllabuses For The Joint Examinations For The School Certificate And General Certificate Of Education*, 1974 (p. 89). This section of the Syllabus points to what is important about structure; namely: structural meaning, conveyed by various structural signals, such as: word order, systematic changes in word forms (e.g. differences between singular and plural forms of the noun, tense forms, comparative forms of adjectives and adverbs); and structural words themselves.

category of errors outlined and elaborated in Chapter II of this study, and Taylor's (1975) five-point taxonomy of error types listed also in Chapter II (see Fig. 4), the present researcher abstracted a few schematic ideas for the broader classification of the error types developed in the summary section of Chapter V of the study, under the categories: interlingual, overgeneralization, transition and intra-lingual errors.

Point of Departure

In the search for a system for analyzing the data, various earlier schemes were considered. The rationale for not here duplicating in toto any existing classification scheme is that regional investigations into problems of a second language acquisition seem to reveal some errors relatively unique to the regions, besides what are regarded as universal problems facing first and second language learners, such as the indiscriminate overgeneralization of the rule governing the use of the past tense morpheme (-ed) to irregular verbs.

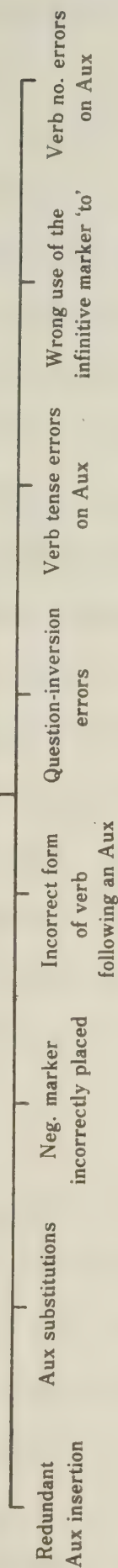
The schema adopted for categorizing errors in the present study shows a departure from Lukendakenda's (1975) classification system at two points: 1) the subcategory, 'Condition,' has been eliminated in this study due to the absence of errors of this category in the compositions written by Nigerian pupils in Forms III and V; 2) the subcategory, 'Word Order,' unprovided for in Lukendakenda's (1975) classification system, has been added to the main category of 'Sentence Errors' in the present study for the following reasons:

1. The category, 'Syntactic Errors,' which deals with errors in the use of function words, did not seem to this researcher to

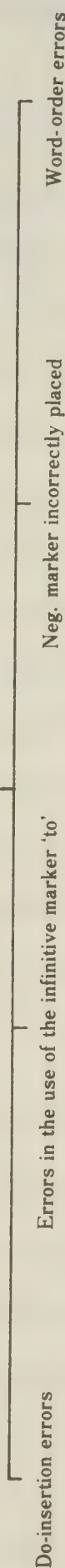
TAYLOR'S TAXONOMY OF ERROR TYPES (MODIFIED)

Main and subdivisions

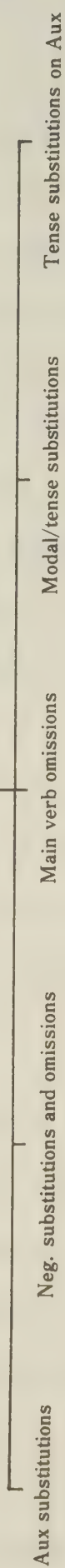
1. OVERGENERALIZATION



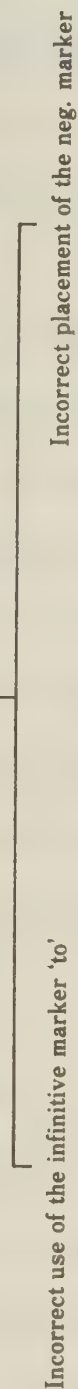
2. TRANSFER ERRORS



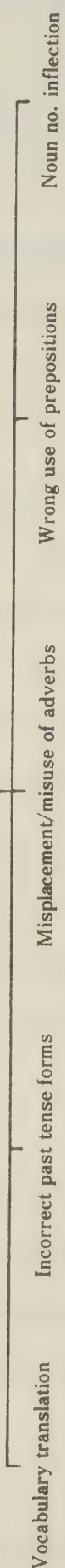
3. TRANSLATION ERRORS



4. ERRORS OF INDETERMINATE ORIGIN



5. ERRORS NOT CONSIDERED



be adequate for handling errors of word order at the sentence level.¹²

2. Part of the purpose of this study was to identify, categorize and describe interlingual errors.
3. A deviation from the English word order has been regarded by researchers in the field of English as a second language as an indicator of interlingual interference.

The absence of the subcategory, 'Word Order,' in Lukendakenda's (1975) analytical schema was justified by that investigator's decision to reject a formal involvement in a comparison between English word order and that of various Bantu languages spoken in his area of investigation.

In Cohen's (1975) and Taylor's (1975) studies, the subcategory, 'error of indeterminate origin,' has been replaced by the subcategory, 'Maze' in this study. The same minor change has been made in Lukendakenda's (1975) subcategory, 'disjointed,' which has been replaced in this study by the subcategory, 'Truncation.' In both cases, however, the idea of a disruption in the flow of thought brought about by word omission, etc., has been retained.

Categorization of Errors

The main task of the investigator was that of sorting, placing, and describing the pooled errors identified by at least three of the four judges, in the categories designed for them in the study. In broad terms, four categories were designed, namely: morphology, syntax, lexis, and sentence structure.

¹²Linguistically, the study of syntax is concerned with how words are combined into larger structures, e.g., phrases, clauses, and sentences. Word Order is an aspect of the study of syntax.

Each of these four categories was further subdivided in terms of form classes (parts of speech) and their structural relationships. At the sentence level, the subdivision labelled 'Translation,' was considered as important as that of 'Word Order' for the reason that most researchers in the field of English as a second language have used translation as a useful device for testing the assumption that some errors in sentence structure made by learners of English as a second language are due to L1 interference.

The four broad categories and their twenty-eight subdivisions appear in Appendix C on the Error Recording Summary Sheet.

Summary

This chapter has described the sample, the testing instrument, and the procedures used in obtaining the data for this study. The seven secondary schools situated in the Cross River State of Nigeria were selected by the method of stratified random sampling. The sample provided the total data of 851 compositions. A further random sampling necessary for ensuring a more manageable corpus for an efficient analysis yielded a sample of 55. By randomly selecting a sub-sample from the total sample, the investigator designated for detailed analysis a corpus in which 20 subjects represent Form III and 35 Form V, respectively.

The chapter has also discussed the use of four judges selected on the basis of their being native speakers of English as well as professionally trained teachers of English in Alberta high schools, the rationale for employing judgment as part of the study design, and the marking practice procedure employed as a necessary first step to

ensuring inter-marker reliability. The pooled results of the judgment of at least three of the four judges constituted a criterion for accepting an error identified as such.

The search for a taxonomic system for error categorization was met by reference to studies by three researchers, notably, Lukendakenda (1975), Taylor (1975) and Cohen (1975). The taxonomy used in categorizing the errors in this study is an adaptation of the taxonomies provided by the three sources mentioned here.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The four hypotheses formulated in Chapter I provide the basis for presenting in this chapter the following results and discussion derived from the data analyzed. The presentation is made in four parts, and each part consists of two sections.

Part 1 presents a quantitative¹³ analysis of morphological error types for Form III and Form V separately and for both Forms pooled. Part 1 (a) presents a statistical treatment of the data relating to similar morphological error types between the two Forms.

Part 2 presents a quantitative analysis of syntactical error types for Form III and Form V separately and for both Forms pooled. Part 2 (a) shows a statistical treatment of the data pertaining to similar syntactical error types between the two Forms.

Part 3 quantitatively analyzes the lexical error types for Form III and Form V separately and for both Forms pooled. Part 3 (a) statistically examines the data in terms of similar lexical error types between the two Forms.

Part 4 presents a quantitative analysis of error types at the sentence level for Form III and Form V separately and for both Forms pooled. Part 4 (a) shows a statistical treatment of the data pertaining to similar error types at the sentence level between the two Forms.

¹³The quantification shows percentage error computed in relation to total words written on the composition topics by one Form. The calculation of percentage error for both Forms pooled was based upon total number of words written by both Forms.

Analysis of the Data

Part 1: A Quantitative Analysis of the Similar Morphological Error Types

Analysis of morphological error types was made at two levels: inflectional and derivational. Inflectional error types consisted of errors relating to the five subcategories of Noun Number, Genitive Construction, Tense, Participle/Gerund, and Concordance. Derivational error types comprised errors relating to the four subcategories of Noun Formation, Verb Formation, Adjective Formation, and Adverb Formation.

Results of the analysis of the data at the inflectional level reveal that Form III pupils made, in a descending order of magnitude, a total of 1.37 per cent errors of Tense, 0.92 per cent errors of Noun Number, 0.54 per cent errors of Concordance, 0.03 per cent errors in the use of Genitive Construction, and 0.03 per cent errors in the use of Participle/Gerund.

Similarly, Form V pupils made, from high to low, a total of 0.83 per cent errors of Tense, 0.51 per cent errors of Noun Number, 0.42 per cent errors of Concordance, 0.10 per cent errors in the use of Genitive Construction, and 0.01 per cent errors in the use of Participle.

At the derivational level the analysis of the data shows that Form III pupils made, in a descending order of frequency, a total of 0.15 per cent errors of Noun Formation, 0.08 per cent errors of Adjective Formation, 0.05 per cent errors of Verb Formation, and 0.03 per cent errors of Adverb Formation. In the same manner, Form V students made, from high to low, a total of 0.06 per cent errors of Noun

Formation, 0.05 per cent errors of Adjective Formation, 0.03 per cent errors of Verb Formation, and 0.03 per cent errors of Adverb Formation.

Both Forms¹⁴ made a total of 0.97 per cent errors of Tense, 0.63 per cent errors of Noun Number, 0.45 per cent errors of Concordance, 0.08 per cent errors of Genitive Construction, and 0.02 per cent errors in the use of the Participle.

At the derivational level, the results of the analysis of the data reveal that both Forms made, from high to low, a total of 0.09 per cent errors of Noun Formation, 0.06 per cent errors of Adjective Formation, 0.03 per cent errors of Verb Formation, and 0.03 per cent errors in the formation of Adverbs.

Part 1 (a): A Statistical Treatment of the Data with Respect to Morphological Error Types Between Forms III and V

Tables 5 and 6 show percentage frequencies of morphological errors at the inflectional level and the results of the chi square test of significance in the distribution of error types between the two Forms. The only significant difference in the distribution of error types at the inflectional level occurred in Noun Number and Tense, and this yielded a chi square of 6.07 and 6.80, respectively. These figures are significant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$ which is 3.84 obtained from the chi square table.

At the derivational level, application of chi square test of significance was possible only at the subcategory of Noun Formation and the chi square of 2.92 is nonsignificant at the critical level of $p < 0.05$.

¹⁴Form III pupils wrote a total of 5,964 words, Form V wrote a total of 14,715 words; both Forms wrote a grand total of 20,675 words in the compositions.

TABLE 5. PERCENTAGE FREQUENCIES OF MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS
AT THE INFLECTIONAL LEVEL

Subcategories	Form III	Form V	Chi square
Noun No.	0.92	0.51	6.07*
Genitive Construction	0.03	0.10	0.72
Tense	1.37	0.83	6.80*
Participle/Gerund	0.03	0.01	— †
Concordance	0.54	0.42	0.89

*Significant, where significance is defined as the critical value of $p < 0.05$, with one degree of freedom (3.84). Chi square values were computed, in each instance throughout this and succeeding tables, by comparing an expected ratio of 14,715:5,964 (i.e., the total word count for each Form) with the observed ratio of actual raw-score errors in each Form; i.e., the total raw-score errors for each item were divided according to this ratio (equivalent to 71% for Form V and 28.6% for Form III) as expected relative frequency of errors in each Form, and these figures in turn compared with observed relative frequency, with chi square evaluation of the significance of the difference between the anticipated and the observed frequencies. Critical chi square values were read from Table C (Ferguson, 1976: 488).

†The blank stands for an impossible computation of chi square values where expected frequency is less than 5 in a cell of a 2 x 2 contingency table used. "Yates' Correction for Continuity" formula (Ferguson, 1976: 201) was applied to expected frequencies not less than 5.

TABLE 6. PERCENTAGE FREQUENCIES OF MORPHOLOGICAL ERRORS
AT THE DERIVATIONAL LEVEL *

Subcategories	Form III	Form V	Chi square
Noun Formation	0.15	0.06	2.92
Verb Formation	0.05	0.03	—
Adjective Formation	0.08	0.05	—
Adverb Formation	0.03	0.03	—

*The critical value of $p < 0.05$ with one degree of freedom is 3.84.

At the morphological level as a whole, errors of Noun Number and Tense provide the only evidence, at these two levels, for the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the distribution of morphological error types between Form III and Form V compositions.

*Part 2: A Quantitative Analysis of the Similar
Syntactical Error Types*

Subsumed under syntactical error category were errors relating to the use of the function words: Article, Pronoun, Auxiliary, Preposition, Conjunction and Qualifier.

Results of the analysis of the data at the syntactical level show that Form III pupils made, in a descending order of occurrence, a total of 0.70 per cent errors in the use of Article, 0.54 per cent errors of Pronoun, 0.37 per cent errors in the use of Auxiliary, 0.40 per cent errors in the use of Preposition, 0.12 per cent Conjunction errors, and 0.07 per cent Qualifier errors. Similarly, Form V students made, from high to low, a total of 0.50 per cent Article errors, 0.45 per cent Pronoun errors, 0.36 per cent Prepositional errors, 0.12 per cent errors in the use of Auxiliary, 0.07 per cent Qualifier errors, and 0.04 per cent Conjunction errors. Both Forms made, from high to low, a total of 0.56 per cent Article errors, 0.47 per cent Pronoun errors, 0.37 per cent Prepositional errors, 0.19 per cent Auxiliary errors, 0.07 per cent Qualifier errors, and 0.06 per cent Conjunction errors.

Part 2 (a): A Statistical Treatment of the Data Pertaining to Similar Syntactical Error Types Between Forms III and V

Table 7 shows percentage frequencies of syntactical errors and the results of the chi square test of significance in the distribution of error types between the two Forms. The only significant difference in the distribution of syntactical error types occurred in Auxiliary, and this yielded a chi square of 7.56. This figure is significant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$.

By and large, there is evidence, only at the subcategory level of Auxiliary, for the rejection of the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the distribution of syntactical error types between Form III and Form V Compositions.

Part 3: A Quantitative Analysis of the Similar Lexical Error Types

Errors of the lexical category consisted of the six subcategories: Noun, Verb, Adjective, Adverb, Wrong Word, and Imprecise Word.

Results of the analysis of the data relating to lexical error types reveal that Form III pupils made no errors of the Noun and Adverb subcategories. But, in a descending order of occurrence, they made a total of 1.26 per cent errors in the use of Wrong Words, 0.97 per cent errors in the use of Imprecise Words, 0.21 per cent Verb errors, and 0.05 per cent Adjective errors. Form V pupils made, from high to low, a total of 0.90 per cent errors in the use of Imprecise Words, 0.81 per cent errors in the use of Wrong Words, 0.07 per cent Noun errors, 0.05 per cent Verb errors, 0.05 per cent Adjective errors, and 0.03 per cent

TABLE 7. PERCENTAGE FREQUENCIES OF SYNTACTICAL ERRORS*

Subcategories	Form III	Form V	Chi Square
Article	0.70	0.50	1.98
Pronoun	0.54	0.45	0.60
Auxiliary	0.37	0.12	7.56*
Preposition	0.40	0.36	0.28
Conjunction	0.12	0.04	—
Qualifier	0.07	0.07	—

*Significant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$ with one degree of freedom which is 3.84.

Adverb errors. Both Forms¹⁵ made, from high to low, a total of 0.94 per cent errors in the use of Wrong Words, 0.92 per cent errors in the use of Imprecise Words, 0.10 per cent Verb errors, and 0.05 per cent Adjective errors.

*Part 3 (a): A Statistical Treatment of the Data in Terms
of the Similar Lexical Error Types*

Table 8 shows percentage frequencies of lexical errors and the results of the chi square test of significance in the distribution of error types between the two Forms. Two instances of significant difference in the distribution of lexical error types appeared in the subcategories Verb and Wrong Word. Each of these instances provided the chi square of 6.15 and 5.10, respectively. These figures are significant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$.

In general terms, errors of Verb and Wrong Word provide the only evidence for rejecting, at these two levels, the null hypothesis assumed in Chapter I that there is no significant difference in the distribution of lexical error types between Form III and Form V Compositions.

*Part 4: A Quantitative Analysis of the Similar Error Types
at the Sentence Level*

The seven constituents of sentence error types were those of the subcategories: Modification, Truncation, Translation, Mazes, Repetition, Comparison and Word Order.

¹⁵Quantification of lexical errors for both Forms for the subcategories of 'Noun' and 'Adverb' was impossible since Form III pupils made no such errors.

TABLE 8. PERCENTAGE FREQUENCIES OF LEXICAL ERRORS

Subcategories	Form III	Form V	Chi square
Noun	—	0.07	—
Verb	0.21	0.05	6.15*
Adjective	0.05	0.05	—
Adverb	—	0.03	—
Wrong Word	1.26	0.81	5.10*
Imprecise Word	0.97	0.90	0.32

*Significant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$ with one degree of freedom which is 3.84.

Results of the analysis of the data at the sentence level show that Form III students made, in a descending order of occurrence, a total of 1.06 per cent errors of Truncation, 0.29 per cent errors classified as Mazes (hybridization), 0.12 per cent errors of Modification, 0.07 per cent Translation errors, 0.08 per cent errors in the use of Comparative Structure, and 0.05 per cent errors of Word Order. They made no Repetition errors. Form V pupils made, from high to low, a total of 0.81 per cent errors of Truncation, 0.14 per cent errors classified as Mazes, 0.14 per cent Word Order errors, 0.09 per cent errors of Modification, 0.07 per cent errors of Translation, 0.07 per cent errors in the use of Comparative Structure, and 0.03 per cent Repetition errors. Both Forms¹⁶ made, from high to low, a total of 0.88 per cent Truncation errors, 0.19 per cent errors of Mazes, 0.11 per cent Word Order errors, 0.09 per cent errors of Modification, 0.07 per cent Translation errors, and 0.06 per cent errors in using Comparative Structure.

Part 4 (a): A Statistical Treatment of the Data Pertaining to the Similar Error Types at the Sentence Level

Table 9 presents percentage frequencies of sentence error types and the results of the chi square test of significance in the distribution of error types between the two Forms. The available chi square figures are nonsignificant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$. The chi square at the critical level of $p < 0.05$ obtained in the relevant table is 3.84.

All in all, there is no evidence, at the sentence level, for

¹⁶Quantification of sentence errors for both Forms was not practicable at the subcategory level, Repetition, as no such errors were made by Form III students.

TABLE 9. PERCENTAGE FREQUENCIES OF SENTENCE ERRORS*

Subcategories	Form III	Form V	Chi square
Modification	0.12	0.09	0.46
Truncation	1.06	0.81	1.83
Translation	0.07	0.07	—
Mazes	0.29	0.14	2.82
Repetition	—	0.03	—
Comparison	0.08	0.07	—
Word Order	0.05	0.14	1.15

*Nonsignificant at the critical value of $p < 0.05$ with one degree of freedom which is 3.84.

rejecting the fourth null hypothesis formulated in Chapter I that there is no significant difference in the distribution of sentence error types between Form III and Form V compositions.

Discussion: Morphological Errors

The search for errors at the morphological level begins with the *word*. This takeoff stage is crucial because the grammatical concept of morphology deals with words and their meaningful parts (Stageberg, 1971:5). To form a new word in English it is necessary to add an inflectional or derivational morpheme to a word stem. It is also possible to "coin" new words which have new stems.

1. *Inflection*

1.1 *Noun Number*: Inflectional errors of Noun Number are those which deal with the distinction between count and mass nouns; that is, they point to learners' problems in discriminating between singular and plural possibilities. Most of the errors of Noun Number made by the subjects of the present study involved the omission of graphemic counterparts of the regular plural morpheme (-s) in its three allomorphic variants (-s, z, ez). For example, the regular morpheme (-s) was omitted in the sentence "We were very happy because our school band was one of the band(-s) to play during the ceremony." Another example of similar omissions of the plural morphemes is provided by the following sentences written by another pupil: "People must be prepared for all such (sorts) of play(-s); then all such of traditional dance(-s)" The wrong choice of 'such' for 'sorts' is glaringly due to faulty pronunciation. There were also a few instances of errors of plural formation which required morphophonemic changes in the stem of the

singular allomorphs to obtain their plural counterparts. An example of this error type is afforded by the following sentence: "He would sent [sic] them all home to enjoyed [sic] themself(-selves)." The student seems to be more concerned with retaining the plural pronoun stem (them-) and less concerned with the reflexive suffix (-self); any change of the number of the reflexive suffix appears to him redundant. There was also an instance of an error of pluralization which involved the unnecessary dropping, by the student, of (-s) from a mass noun. Such an error is evident in the sentence: "So far I stop till yours comes which I think will bring good new [news] to me." The problem here is one of the student's internalization of the word 'news' as being appropriate only when one is thinking about items of information exceeding one.

The high incidence of inflectional errors noticed in the compositions seems to have roots in the paucity in Efik/Ibibio languages, of inflectional suffixes comparable to the regular plural-marking morphemes in English. Goldie (1964: xxiii) has referred to the scarcity in Efik of formal inflectional suffixes for marking noun number, gender and case. In his own words:

In the usage of the Efik, there is not at all that attention given to the indication of number, which is given in all written languages. In most cases, it is not indicated in any way, a practice which seems singularly inaccurate; and when indicated, it is frequently by the adjective.

He specifies, however, that "in those nouns which have a plural form, the plural number is in most cases indicated by inflection." For example, in Efik, the singular for 'father' is 'Ete', the plural is 'Mmete'; the singular for 'mother' is 'Eka', the plural is 'Mmeka'.

In some cases, "the number of nouns is marked also by employing different words as in: 'Eyen' — singular for 'child' — and 'Nditɔ'¹⁷ — plural for 'children' (Goldie, 1964: xxiii). Thus, nouns in Efik/Ibibio are inflected for number in any of the following three ways: 1) by prefixing 'Mme', 2) by a combination of a numeral adjective and a noun such as in 'owo kiet' (one person) singular, 'owo iba', 'ediwak owo' (two persons, a lot of people, respectively); and 3) by the use of a word entirely different from the word signalling a singular noun, as in 'Nwan' — singular for a 'woman' — and 'Iban' — plural for 'women'. This paucity of formal inflectional suffixes in Efik/Ibibio has a proactive effect on the pupils' L2 acquisition.

1.2 Genitive Construction: Errors of Genitive Construction involve the pronoun paradigms: I, you, he, she, it, and their plural counterparts: we, you, and they, inflected to show possession denoted by: my/mine, your/yours, its, our/ours, their/theirs, his, her/hers. They also include an omission or misplacement of an apostrophe (') — a morpheme usually marking the genitive case in English.

Errors of this subcategory were relatively few and consisted mainly of omission or misplacement of the genitive marker ('). The following sentences illustrate the pupils' omissions and misplacements of the genitive morpheme: "After the Divisional Officers (Officers') speeches, the soldiers marched"; "The fire has now started reaching other places as (such as) the chief(-'s) house"; and "Now tell me how your new year (year's) National Celebration treating [sic] you."

¹⁷The Efik/Ibibio vowel phoneme 'ɔ' is an equivalent of the English phoneme 'o' as in 'cot' (Appendix F).

1.3 *Tense*: Tense errors constituted the highest percentage of the errors made by the subjects of this study. The main problem evident in the compositions is that of the subjects' misunderstanding of the concepts of Tense and Aspect relating to the English verb structure. Instances of this confusion of concepts appear in the following illustrative quotations: 1) "A fire incident has just took place in my town due to an insane man who just got to the filling station when the petrol was being distributed to the consumers." In this example, the student has made two errors; namely, an error of Tense and another of Aspect. What seems to be a more appropriate tense form for the situation he has described is the simple past tense form (took place). The second error involves the omission of the (-en) morpheme. The (-en) form of a verb is an important part of the Auxiliary structure of the English verb phrase. It is generally referred to as the past participle form. 2) The second example which follows illustrates yet another problem with the simple past tense form: "He also saw how many people quiver for (from) cold and even sat near the fire." In this ambiguous sentence structure the student has omitted the (-ed) morpheme essential for expressing the simple past form of the verb 'quiver'. 3) In the third example, "In particular the people of North America having (have) four seasons in a year," the problem is one in which the student has used the present participle form (having) as a substitute for the present tense form (have), supposedly to express the semantic notion of a progressive occurrence.

The cause of the three errors quoted seems to be the inherent complexity of the English verb system. The English verb system involving

tense and aspect is intrinsically confusing to all learners of the language, but more so to those for whom English is their second language. To the learner of English as a second language, tense is understood to be synonymous with time. To the modern grammarian, the English verb is recognized as having two tenses — present and past — and tense is exclusively used to describe certain specified forms of the verbs and modals (Aurbach *et al.*, 1971: 53). This indicates that all the various distinctions of time including present, past, and future are handled in a variety of ways through the auxiliary structure. Thus, the term *aspect* is often employed to describe the part which (have + -en) and (be + -ing) play in the verb phrase (Aurbach *et al.*, 1971: 54). Aspect is considered semantically important for expressing the duration of an event or action. Aurbach *et al.* (1971: 54) have succinctly dramatized the role of aspect in the following string of morphemes: "Something is going on, has been going on, had been going on, etc. (p. 54).

There is a widespread similarity of the problem of tense revealed by the Nigerian pupils of the present study and those studied by Olu Tomori (1971). Other studies which have indicated a high incidence of tense problems include Lukendakenda's (1975) analysis of errors in the written English compositions of Tanzanian students and Greenland's (1968) analysis of errors in the written compositions of Form I pupils of Makerere College, Uganda. The root of these errors is traceable to the pupils' ignorance or incomplete mastery of the available distinctions in the English verb system in terms of tense and aspect. Ross (1976: 171-2) has briefly summarized part of the nature of the problem. She says:

The distinction between action, happening at the moment or continuing over a period of time, indicated by a form *be* and a present participle, as opposed to permanent condition, indicated by the present tense, is a feature of English grammar that perhaps is not paralleled exactly in another language.

1.4 *Participle/Gerund*: As if by design, the pupils shied away from making an extensive use of constructions involving the present participle and none at all of the gerund. However, in the few constructions in which the present participle appeared it was incorrectly used. For example, in the sentence, "The students here can cause riot [sic] and thus accusing (accuse) the authority of corruption," the word "accusing," referring anaphorically to the headword 'students' in the first clause structure, cannot be classified as a present participle because its verb form "cause" is necessary to provide the predicate of the second clause structure following the coordinator "and." In another example, "Then they go round the village singing and dance [sic]" the present participle form (dancing) was omitted. There were abundant problems in the use of the past participle, the discussion of which appears under the subcategory 'Auxiliary'.

1.5 *Concordance*: The subcategory of Concordance dealt with the pupils' inability to effectively handle the grammatical concept of subject-verb agreement. As revealed by the percentage of errors for each Form, errors of Concordance ranked third, just below those of Tense and Noun Number. The following sentences are quoted from the compositions to illustrate errors of Concordance: "Their father usually keep (keeps) his drum of petrol in the house"; "Many things were destroyed in the house: houses, stores, post office was (were) also burnt down";

"In Bible Knowledge we know (learn) that Christ have (has) said that 'heaven and earth will pass away . . .'" These few examples represent many of the Concordance errors observed in the compositions.

The problem here is not one of there being no subject-verb agreement principle in Efik/Ibibio languages. For, as Goldie (1964: xxxi) and Akpanyung (1962: 45-59) have demonstrated, the Efik verb admits of inflection to express Person, Number, Time, and Negation. Goldie (1964: xxxi) has further explained that it is uniformly the initial syllable that undergoes inflection in the 'conjugation' of the verb except in the negative form. Thus, in the following Efik/Ibibio verb paradigm, subject-verb agreement is achieved by inflecting the initial syllable except the 1st Person singular and plural forms which assume 'n' and 'i' pronominal prefixes:

<i>Singular</i>	<i>Plural</i>
Ami ndep - I buy	Nnyin idep - We buy
Afo edep - You buy	Mbufo edep - You buy
Enye edep - He, she, buys	Mmo edep - They buy

What seems, then, to be the main cause of errors of Concordance is not unconnected with intralingual interference, i.e. the inherently confusing features of the English verb system, particularly its replacive allomorphs and the suppletive forms of some verbs. In English, the 3rd Person singular morpheme (-s) is added to the verb stem to mark subject-verb agreement, as in *learn* - *learn-s*. There are, however, occasional exceptions to this rule. For instance, the verb 'does' adds a replacive allomorph to the stem /du-/ which rewrites as /dez/ in the 3rd Person singular. The verb *be* is the most confusing of all the

verbs in English. Unlike other verbs having five forms for expressing, through (Aux), various distinctions of time, and for inflecting for number, the verb *be* has eight. Arranged paradigmatically, the forms of *be* are: *be, am, is, are, being, was, were, and been*. A large percentage of the errors of Concordance made in the use of the verb *be* is caused by the pupils' inability to choose correctly from among the eight possible suppletive forms of *be*. The second or foreign language learner is inclined toward considering as redundant (George, 1972: 107-117), the suffixal affixation of the 3rd Person marker (-s) which characterizes regular English verbs.

2. *Derivational Errors*

It has already been stated in this chapter that three avenues are open for the formation in English of a new word, i.e. through the addition of an inflectional or derivational morpheme to a word stem as well as by new coinages.

2.1 Noun Formation: By means of the linguistic device of affixation, a large number of nouns in English are formed from other nouns, verbs, adjectives or adverbs. By contrast, Efik/Ibibio nouns are most commonly derived from verbs through various prefixing devices. Wolf (1971: 181) has shown that in the whole of the Niger-Congo, more or less the same situation as is found in Benue-Congo, i.e. prefixing, seems to prevail. The English language employs both suffixing and prefixing as devices for the formation of nouns and other 'form' classes.

In the present study, errors of Noun Formation were relatively

few. A few examples are quoted below for illustrative purposes: "There they displayed acrobatically." What the student meant to express here was the notion of masqueraders performing acrobatics. Another error of this subcategory was ". . . then all the students will prefer going (to go) on a sympathetic (sympathy) strike." In the example: "The army band played a short slow - marching (march) for him and the command [sic] of that battalion," the errors involve deletion of the (-ing) morpheme in "marching," and the addition of the agent marker or the derivative suffix (-er) to the word "command" for appropriateness.

2.2 Verb Formation: The process of verb formation is in no way drastically different from that of Noun formation, Adjective formation, or Adverb formation. Each requires, where possible, addition of an appropriate derivational suffix or prefix to transform the item to a new 'form' class.

Errors of Verb formation were also relatively few. The following are some of the errors made: "The palm fruit will ripe (ripen) and milled (be milled or processed) for export." Also, "The Registrar fail [sic] to response (respond) whenever his attention is needed."

2.3 Adjective Formation: Errors of Adjective formation ranked second to those of Noun formation. Three such errors are quoted here for illustration: "My keen and interest (interesting) two subjects are English and Agricultural Science"; "During this period everything in the forest gets dried up leaving only scantily (scanty) leaves"; and "Women start to scrub their houses, decorate it (them) with difference (different) colours." The first error quoted above further illustrates

to some extent, an error in the ordering of qualifiers.

2.4 *Adverb Formation*: Errors of Adverb formation were as few as those of Verb formation. The following two errors are quoted for exemplification: "Men, women, children will dressed [sic] proper [sic] and . . ."; "It is usual [sic] played with drums." In each case, the error involves omission of the derivational suffix (-ly).

3. *Syntactic Errors — Function Words*

Syntax specifically deals with the ways in which words are arranged to form sentences. Errors of syntax looked for in the present study were those involving structural words (function words). An omission or a misplacement of function words in the students' compositions counted as an error of syntax.

3.1 *Article*: As revealed by the percentage errors shown in this chapter, both Forms made many errors of omission involving the determiners 'a/the'. These determiners are commonly contrasted as *indefinite* and *definite* articles, respectively. The use of the determiner 'an' as a counterpart of 'a' is determined by a following word whose phonemic symbol begins with either a vowel sound or a silent consonant 'h'.

For semantic reasons, the choice in English between 'a' and 'the' is sometimes determined by whether a specific subject is being first introduced. Commonly, when a subject is first introduced, 'a' is used with singular count nouns. After initial occurrence the noun patterns with 'the' (Nichols, 1965: 27). A plural noun takes no determiner 'a'.

For learners of English as a second language, the subtle distinctions between the articles 'a/the' pose acute problems. The cause seems

to be that some languages have different devices for specifying the distinctions handled by articles in English. For instance, Efik-Ibibio languages employ numeral adjectives to mark singular count nouns, and descriptive or demonstrative words or phrases to refer to common contexts handled in English by the determiner 'the'. Thus, in the expressions — "eyen kiet" -- 'a child', and 'eyen oro' — 'the (that) child', the numeral and demonstrative adjectives perform functions approximating the 'a' and 'the' of the articles in English. Ross (1976: 171) has explicated article problems facing non-native learners of English. She says:

In English, the conceptual basis for use or omission of the article is a persistent problem for most non-native learners. For Spanish, French, or German learners the problem is not great, as the concept of specifying by use of article exists in these languages, although lack of an article before "non-count" non-definitized nouns may cause error. The native speaker of a language such as Persian (Farsi), however, must learn to think in terms of quite different concepts in regard to noun marking, as must the English speaker who learns Persian.

Difference in conceptual thinking regarding noun marking by means of articles was, to a large extent, responsible for the numerous article errors in this study. The following examples exemplify errors of omission or wrong use of articles in the compositions: "Plants would die and decay to form a manure." This sentence exemplifies an inappropriate use of the article with a mass noun (manure) which requires none. In the second sentence, "When he came to Nigeria, it was in dry season," the definite article has been omitted. "It is made up of group of young men." This sentence affords yet another instance of an article omission error.

3.2 *Pronouns*: In terms of percentage, Pronoun errors ranked second to those of Articles. Most of these errors involved the use of Pronouns out of context (Nichols, 1965: 20), i.e. without immediate referents or antecedents. For example, "After they had finished, the divisional executive read an address given by the State Military Governor" In this quotation the Personal Pronoun, 'they', was used out of context. There were also instances of lack of Noun-Pronoun concord as is evident in the following quotation: "The yams harvested at this time is not [sic] the ones that are sold, this [sic] are mainly meant for the celebration and it [sic] is normally called the 'cut-head yam'."

The cause of Pronoun errors can hardly be attributed to absence of Pronouns and their concord with nouns, in Efik/Ibibio. Both Goldie (1964: xxvii-xxviii) and Akpanyung (1962: 21-25) provide elaborate discussion of Pronouns and their classifications available in the subjects' L1. In Efik/Ibibio, Pronouns are divided into Personal, Possessive, Reflexive, Relative, Interrogative, and Demonstrative. The present investigator thinks that the tendency towards "clipping," i.e. using Pronouns to stand for unnamed referents, stems from faulty speech habits.

3.3 *Auxiliary*: The focus on errors of this subcategory included errors of the passive construction and modals. In English, the Passive Voice is marked by the (-en) morpheme added to the verb stem to signal an action performed by an agent or instrument. Modals include: *may*, *can*, *will*, *shall*, etc. Comparatively, Auxiliary errors were less frequent than those of either Article or Pronoun and consisted mainly

of omission of the (-en) morpheme. For example, "People are kill," and "I think some of them might be close down." These two quotations exemplify the pupils' errors in the use of the Auxiliary construction. The fact that both Forms erred in the formation of the Past Participle (-en) construction is an indicator of the pupils' attempt to simplify and regularize the grammar of the target language (Taylor, 1975: 65). There were no errors in the use of modals.

3.4 Preposition: Prepositional errors ranked third compared with those of Article and Pronoun, and consisted mainly of omissions or misuse. For example, "The one I was most interested was the yam festival," "It is always played at night about 9 p.m. to about 3 a.m.". These two examples illustrate errors of omission, Misuse of Preposition occurred in the following pair of quotations: "Dry season starts from (in) November and end [sic] late February," "We set fire in the bush."

French (1949: 66) recognized the importance in English of Prepositions and commented on the possibility of their being misused. In his words:

Prepositions are by far the most important and the most frequently used of all structural words, and prepositional phrases provide more phrase-patterns than any other kind of collocation. Prepositions are omitted, misapplied, and wrongly inserted in every conceivable way.

The confirmation of French's (1949) observation is amply provided by the findings of the present study.

3.5 Conjunction: Omission and misuse of coordinators and subordinators constituted errors of Conjunction. Conjunction errors were far less numerous than Prepositional ones. There were, however, more

instances of omissions than of misuse. The following example illustrates both types of errors, i.e. misuse and omission: "She did the cooking of the rice very well and (but) when it came to the cooking of the stew she didn't be able [sic]," and "Eventually when the stew was still boiling it explored (exploded) fire began to spread." The coordinator, 'and', was omitted before the concluding clause.

3.6 Qualifier: The concern with errors of this subcategory involved wrongly used single-word intensifiers, quantifiers, and demonstratives. Relative to Prepositional errors, Qualifier errors occurred less frequently. The following quotations exemplify Qualifier errors: "He begged this woman to cooked [sic] this things [sic] for him," "Mr. Ugba's servant was very happy that he was helped by this people," and "It is the very (most) interesting celebration I have ever watched." The first two sentences illustrate demonstratives which do not agree in number with their headwords. The last one shows an intensifier wrongly used for a quantifier.

4. Lexical Errors

Discussion of the mechanics of forming new 'form' classes from existing ones appears under Morphology and errors arising therefrom are treated as derivational. At the lexical level, the investigator concerned himself with errors of inappropriate choice of lexical items within their 'form' classes: Noun, Verb, Adjective or Adverb.

4.1 Noun: It has been stated earlier in this chapter that Form III pupils made no errors of this subcategory. The relatively few lexical noun errors made by Form V were mainly those connected with

pluralization of mass nouns. The following quotation from one of the pupils' compositions illustrates a typical error of this subcategory: "Many chairs, tables, windows, frames, clothes were burnt to ashes. And also the school register brought home by the husband was partly burnt and (as well as) many other valuable properties (items of property)," and "In (upon) hearing this evil deeds [sic] many crowd (a large crowd) was drawn to the incident." Similar errors occurred in the use of terms denoting furniture, etc.

4.2 *Verb*: Slightly more lexical verb errors appeared in Form III compositions than in Form V. These errors consisted mainly of an incorrect verb ending following a modal and a negative marker, an incorrect verb ending after the infinitive marker 'to', or the auxiliary verb in the past form. The following quotations exemplify such errors: "They could not imagined (imagine) the sound in which they have heard meant (what the sound they had heard meant)"; "But this woman did well to took [sic] something to him"; and "After that, he would sent [sic] all home to enjoyed [sic] himself (themselves)." These errors afford yet another instance of pupils' attempts to regularize and systematize the grammar of the target language. Cognitively, they have observed that reference to an action performed in the past is customarily expressed in English by a verb in the preterite form (-ed). They over-generalize this rule by simplifying the complexity involving changes in verb ending to accommodate modal auxiliary or the infinitive form.

4.3 *Adjective*: The incidence of Adjective errors in the compositions was less frequent than that of Verb errors. Such errors reflected: faulty pronunciation, inability to distinguish between verb and adjective

endings of a word or words, or inappropriate use of adjectives as substantives. The following sentences from the compositions illustrate Adjective error types: "They were all serve (safe)"; "Things are kept quite dried (dry)"; and "Young beautifuls (beautiful young girls) would be selected to be her attendants."

4.4 *Adverb*: An omission, wrong choice, or use of an adverb where another lexical item was preferred, counted as an Adverb error. However, no Adverb errors were made by Form III pupils, and less than five such errors appeared in the Form V compositions. The following quotation serves as an illustration: "If the food is not welled (well) prepared and served in a good way (nicely served), this will cause a riot."

4.5 *Wrong Word*: Basically, any word which failed to make sense in the context in which it appeared constituted an error of Wrong Word. As revealed by the chi square statistic used in this study for determining independence or association between the two Forms in terms of error distribution, there was a significant difference in the frequency distribution of lexical error types at the Wrong Word level (see Table 8) between Form III and Form V compositions. Whereas Form III pupils wrote a total of 5,964 words as against Form V's total of 14,715 words, they made more wrong word errors than Form V. This is an indication of developmental errors. The following are examples: "Many festivals are in circulation (held everywhere)"; "Students are in different schools sworting (studying hard)"; "Many expensive things were devastated (burnt)"; "The idol . . . does not allow somebody (anybody) from my village to get lost in water (in the sea)"; and "They would invest (invite) people from different places." The last quoted error is presumably due

to faulty pronunciation. An instance of wrong word error traceable either to homophony or faulty pronunciation is furnished by the sentence: "Sometimes the roads become overflowed with water (the roads are flooded)." George (1972: 156-158) has referred to homophony as a possible source of intralingual interference and has pointed out that the incidence of homophony is greatest in the high-frequency kind of vocabulary most likely to be used with a class of beginners (p. 157). More specifically, learners are likely to make homophony errors from the manner in which remedial work is handled or from their perception of what appears to be redundant in pronunciation.

4.6 *Imprecise Word*: Wherever a word used in a sentence did not exactly fit the context (Lukendakenda, 1975: 223), it counted as an error of Imprecision. Errors of this subcategory ranked second only to those of Wrong Word. Examples: "While in the wet season we cannot tread (travel) for such a distance"; "Its significance is to give comfort (contextually, the idea implied is: to fulfil a basic need, i.e., production of foodstuff)"; and "You wouldn't want to return to your country but to watch another celebration (i.e., until you've watched a similar celebration)."

5. *Sentence Errors*

Sentence errors consisted of aberrations involving modifiers, truncation, translation, mazes, repetition, comparison, and word order.

5.1 *Modification*: Whereas misuse of single-qualifying words such as quantifiers, etc., constituted Qualifier errors (3.6), the investigator's centre of concentration with respect to Modification errors was

misuse or omission of relatives necessary for relativization transformation. A quasi-parity in terms of Modification errors between the two Forms is reflected in the percentage shown in this chapter. A few examples of this type of error include: "The fire has now started reaching (has spread to) other places as (such as) the chief(-'s) house was closer to the filling station"; "This traditional play has a dog and this dog is not seen by the eye"; and "The wet season is the time we have a long school holiday."

In each of the three examples of Modification errors quoted above, the problem is one of omission of a relative "which" and "when." A relative morpheme functioning as headword in its own clause structure is one of the various ways available for performing sentence-combining transformations (O'Donnel, *et al.*, 1967: 57-68).

5.2 Truncation: Truncation errors consisted of omission of a word or words and the use of sentence fragments which affected coherence. Errors of Truncation ranked highest relative to other subcategories of the Sentence level. The following sentences illustrate errors of Truncation: "Farmers work hard before the arrival of the season. Fishermen there net (make their) in preparation for fishing while the bird are [sic] getting ready with there (their) net (nest)." The example illustrates, *inter alia*, an error of omission which is capable of disrupting the free flow of the reader's comprehension.

5.3 Translation: An error was marked for Translation if: (a) in the opinion of the investigator, a distorted English structure was due to the writer's direct transfer into English of the idiom of his L1; (b) there was evidence of a forced translation into English of

a lexical item appropriate for L1, but apparently nonexistent or inappropriate for L2. Translation errors were relatively few compared to Truncation errors. The following quotations illustrate typical Translation errors: ". . . petrol which is a typical enemy to fire." The lexical item 'enemy' is inappropriate in English because the juxtaposition of 'enemy' and 'petrol' violates the principle of co-occurrence. The example, however, illustrates a forced translation into English of a lexical item which is appropriate in L1 but inappropriate in L2. In Efik/Ibibio, the sentence "Petrol edi asua ye ikaŋ"¹⁸ is commonly used to express the explosive outcome of a fire lit in close proximity to petrol. In other words, in Efik/Ibibio, 'asua' (enemy) co-occurs with both animate and inanimate objects. Another Translation error was: "If it were in those years, we should study hard to be promoted to the next class." In this example, the meaning of the conditional clause introduced by "if" relative to the main clause, "we should (would) . . ." is obscure because the pupil is referring to an unknown context, i.e. her primary school years when success and promotion were rewarded with school prizes and parental gifts. The conditional clause rendered in Efik/Ibibio is "Ekipedi ke mme isua oro ekebede" Another example of a Translation error appears in the sentence: "She wants to go and see how things look like for only two years." This is a direct translation into English of the Efik version: "Enye oyom ndika nkese nte nkpo etiede isua iba." Contextually, reference is to a girl who has gone to the U.K. for further studies and will spend two years studying and travelling.

¹⁸The Efik/Ibibio velar nasal stop 'ŋ' is articulated as in (siŋ) in the English word 'sing'.

Translation is a phenomenon affecting burgeoning bilinguals. It is a switching process whereby information already encoded in L1 is encoded in L2 (Macnamara, 1967: 72). But, as Macnamara has observed, encoding a message from L1 to L2 is not always thorough because for every word and expression in every language there is no "exact counterpart in every other language" (p. 72).

5.4 *Mazes*: What constituted errors categorized as Mazes were collocations which were unintelligible to both the raters and the investigator himself. Examples: "In history we know that some other thing had happened in different countries while others will not know about it." Also, "In each of the houses in the first group will make sure that theirs first is present in the celebration, if not so the chief would not the particular house to in the celebration." In both quotations, the writer's intended meaning remains obscure, and each structure defies the raters' or readers' comprehension. Errors of Mazes ranked second relative to those of Truncation and Word Order.

5.5 *Repetition*: Errors marked for Repetition were those involving unnecessary duplication of sentence patterns or ideas previously expressed. For example: "In dry [sic] season, it is easier to keep things clean and tidy because everything will be dry (is dry) and whenever we wash our things, they will get dry more quickly than in the wet season." No errors of Repetition occurred in the Form III compositions and very few appeared in Form V's.

5.6 *Comparison*: Comparison errors indicated the writer's problem with comparative sentence patterns involving adjectivals and adverbials.

Examples: "It is for this reason I say that dry season [sic] is my best favourite period"; "Dry season is the best season I like in my country"; and "Holiday makers (vacationers) enjoy this period most because one must visit his hometown during the season (this season)."

Each of the quotations indicates that the pupils have not attained complete mastery of the inflectional morphemes necessary for marking comparison in English. Unlike countries in Europe and North America, Nigeria experiences two seasons: the wet and dry. In English, a comparison involving two things is marked, in one-syllable adjectives, by the suffix (-er) followed by the free morpheme 'than'; three or more syllable adjectives take 'more/most' + adjective, and two-syllable adjectives may *usually* take either, e.g. *ugly* - *uglier*, *able* - *abler* or *more able*, followed by 'than'. As revealed by the percentage errors, Comparison errors were relatively few in contrast to those of Mazes or Modification.

5.7 *Word Order*: Aberrations from the English word order were marked as indicators of interlingual interference. Word Order errors were fewer in Form III and slightly more in Form V. For example: "In the first place, we make it a National Celebration because it was on that day that Nigeria 15th March 1960 (strictly speaking, 1st October) that we are not under the control of the British rule again." Although, by the judgment of the raters, this quotation constituted an error of Word Order, the investigator considered that it was not, on the grounds that the pupil started well but, in the process, got bogged down by her inability to quote correctly the date on which Nigeria achieved nationhood. The psychological basis of the last part of the quotation was

one of uncertainty which, possibly, led to the writer's mental imbalance. However, what approximates a wrong-word order caused, in part, by L1 interference is furnished by the following second quotation: "The soldiers first of all started to marched [sic] then followed the students and the pupils in the primary schools." The intended meaning was: Soldiers led the march and they were closely followed by high school and primary school pupils. This, obviously, is the reverse of the meaning conveyed to the reader whose L1 is English, by the word order of the quotation. However, in Efik/Ibibio, the word order of the quotation would need to be slightly altered for acceptance. Thus, "Akpa, mme soldiers etɔ́nɔ ndisana; ndien ndito ufɔk ɲwed secondary ye primary ediana." The word "ediana" carries out the semantic and syntactic function performed in English by a form of *be* and 'follow(-ed)' and the preposition 'by' necessary in some passive constructions. A distortion of the English word order often leads to obscurity or ambiguity in meaning. French (1949) observed that word order "lies at the base of all English frames in English" (p. 39). In the opinion of the investigator, however, although language is a species-specific phenomenon (Lenneberg, 1967: 175), the ordering of the deep structure of one language does not strictly correspond to that of another language. The same argument has been put forward by Di Pietro (1971) against the notion expressed by some linguists about the so-called universal syntactic ordering. In his words: ". . . a linear order worked out for the deep structure of one language may not be appropriate to any other" (p. 59).

Summary

This chapter presents quantitatively and statistically the results of the analysis of the data for Forms III and V. The presentation is made in strict conformity to the order followed by the four hypotheses formulated in Chapter I, i.e., about independence or association of the two Forms, in terms of error frequency distribution. The chi square statistic chosen as a test of the hypotheses at the $p < 0.05$ critical level, has revealed five instances of significant difference in the frequency distribution of the error types made by pupils in the two Forms. These differences occur at the levels of Noun Number, Tense, Auxiliary, Verb (lexical),¹⁹ and Wrong Word.

Also, at each main category level, errors quantified in percentage for each subcategory were compared. For instance, at the morphological-inflectional level, errors of the subcategory, Tense, loomed the largest, and were followed by those of Noun Number and Concordance. At the morphological-derivational level, errors of Noun Formation, though relatively few, ranked the highest and were followed by those of Adjective, Verb, and Adverb. At the Syntactical level, Article errors ranked the highest followed by those of Pronoun and Preposition. The lowest percentage figures were recorded for Conjunction and Qualifier errors. At the level of Lexis, the highest percentage error was registered at the subcategory level of Wrong Word. The next highest percentage was recorded for errors of Imprecision. The highest percentage error at the

¹⁹Of the initial six components of the lexical category, two were not amenable to comparison because of there being no data for Form III pupils at the subcategories of 'Noun' and 'Adverb'.

Sentence level was recorded for the subcategory, Truncation, followed by Mazes. The lowest percentages observed were for Comparison and Translation.

The cause of the highest percentage of Verb errors at the Inflectional level was explained as an intralingual phenomenon, i.e., as due to the inherently confusing aspects of the target language. Part of the source of the verb errors was also explained on the basis of over-generalization — that is, the pupils' attempt to circumvent the complex rules of English grammar by the device of their own generating of simplified rules.

Similarly, the pupils' misuse or omission of Articles was attributed to the absence, in their L1, of adequate Article devices capable of bringing out the subtle distinctions handled by a/the in English.

Other areas of concern were those of the misuse of Comparative Structure and Word Order. In the latter case, i.e. Word Order, the researcher tends to hold the view that although language is species-specific, there seems to be no universal linearity in the ordering of the deep structure of languages. The deep structure of a language is tailored to suit the users' perceptions of reality, i.e., their way of cognizing and thinking about their environment, and this appears to be a cultural rather than a strictly linguistic matter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Nigeria is a multilingual nation where English as a second language, and as a medium of instruction for most of the country's educational system, co-exists with the several hundred indigenous languages. Occupying, as it does, the status of a second language, English is vulnerable to problems peculiar to languages in contact.

The need for the present study was to find an answer to the question: To what extent can errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and structural patterns present in written English compositions of Nigerian secondary school students be attributed to interlingual and intralingual interference? Specifically, the study addressed itself to the task of: identifying linguistic problems in the written English compositions of Form III and Form V students with respect to errors in morphology, syntax, lexis, and sentence structure, determining the frequency of each of the types of errors, categorizing and describing the errors which appear under three broad categories, namely: universal errors in English grammar (intralingual), errors due to mother tongue interference (interlingual), and errors of indeterminate source (mazes). The ancillary category, overgeneralization — an outgrowth of intralingual errors — has been described as resulting from learners' attempts to simplify and regularize the complex rules of adult grammar. The final phases of the study's assignment were to compare the types and frequency of errors made by Form III and Form V pupils in order to ascertain which error

types are most prevalent and at what level, and to determine whether a curriculum in English Composition for Form III and a remediation sequence in English Composition for Form V are warranted.

The sample for the study was obtained, via a formal request, from seven secondary schools situated in the Cross River State of Nigeria where the Cross River subgroups of the Benue-Congo are spoken. The method of selection adopted was one of stratification by sex, type of school, linguistic group, and location. Six of the schools selected are grammar schools; the remaining one is a secondary commercial school. All the seven schools requested to participate in the study yielded the total data of 851 compositions. By using the technique of random sampling recommended by Helmstadter (1970) a manageable corpus of 55 compositions were obtained. Twenty of these came from the less numerous sample, i.e, the sector representing Form III pupils in the total sample while the remaining 35 compositions were those of the more numerous Form V pupils.

The pupils were exposed to writing English Composition on any one of six topics set by the investigator. The topics set for the test reflected four of the major types of 'essays' specified in the West African School Certificate Syllabus (1974), namely: narrative, descriptive, argumentative, and expository. The actual administration of the test in Nigeria was done by Form Instructors in English Language. The duration of the test was set for forty minutes.

In order for the investigator to achieve a valid judgment and objective results he assigned the 55 scripts to each of the four non-Nigerian judges. He envisaged an additional advantage from the employment

of external judges, i.e. that their intuitive faculty as native speakers of English and their professional expertise as teachers of English in Alberta high schools would ensure a superior level of competence in a major Anglophone culture to which Nigerian pupils of English Language might aspire. A judgmental consensus derived from the pooling of individual results of the four or at least three judges provided the criterion for accepting an error as such.

The results of the analysis of the data reveal that intralingual interference accounted for more than seventy-five per cent of the errors made by the Nigerian pupils (Appendix G). That is to say, interference caused by the pupils' mother tongue contributed minimally to the overall aberrations. Errors of indeterminate source (mazes) also formed a negligible part of the overall linguistic abnormalities noticed in the compositions. Errors of the ancillary category of overgeneralization exceeded those of mazes as well.

Summary

Intralingual Errors

Morphological Level: The highlight of the present study is that intralingual errors occurred most frequently at the inflectional subcategory level of Tense. This fact is reflected by the percentage error which appears in the Error Recording Sheet (Appendix C). Form III pupils, in particular, made 1.37 per cent errors of Tense. Form V made 0.83 per cent Tense errors. Both Forms made a total of 0.97 per cent errors of Tense. The relative difference in the two separate percentage figures for both Forms does not adequately represent transitional errors for

Form III because of the appearance between the Forms of similar error types. The main problem with regard to Tense is the subjects' misunderstanding of the concepts of Tense and Aspect relating to the English verb structure. In most cases, Tense errors involved omission of the requisite inflectional morphemes (-ed) and (-en) which are markers of the preterite, present perfect, and past perfect tenses, respectively, and the use of the future tense form of verbs, handled by the auxiliary, where the present tense form is preferred. Misuse of the present participle form (-ing) as a substitute for the present tense form appeared infrequently.

Next to errors of Tense, though occurring less frequently, were errors of Noun Number. The main problem facing the subjects of this study is their inability to discriminate between singular and plural possibilities with particular reference to count and mass nouns. Most of the errors of Noun Number made involved the omission of the regular plural morpheme (-s) in its three allomorphic variants (-s, z, ez). There were also numerous instances of inflection of mass nouns for plural and a few of addition of a zero morpheme (\emptyset) to a mass noun, i.e., by eliminating the deceptive ending (-s) of the word's spelling so as to obtain the singular form of the word. The percentage figures for errors of Noun Number made by Forms III and V were 0.92 and 0.51 respectively. For both Forms the percentage was 0.63.

Third in order of magnitude and their frequency of occurrence were errors of Concordance. The relative percentage figures of 0.54 and 0.42 were made by Forms III and V respectively. Both Forms made a total of 0.45 per cent errors of Concordance. The pupils evinced their inability

to effectively accommodate the grammatical concept of subject-verb agreement. The main problem areas were those of omission of the 3rd Person singular marker (-s) in regular verb forms, choice of the suppletive forms of the verb *be* incongruent with the number of the subject noun phrase, and poor choice of replacive forms of verbs inflected for number.

Apparently, the main cause of errors of Tense, Concordance, and Noun Number is intralingual interference. That is, the inherently confusing features of English grammar not only pose problems to second language learners but also, in most cases, they appear to the learners as redundant.

Syntactical Level: Generally, confusion arising from the use of the Articles 'a/an' and 'the' is minimal to learners of English as their L1, and to speakers of other languages where specification by use of Article exists, but maximal to speakers of other languages where specification is expressed by means of other linguistic devices such as demonstratives and numerals. As appears in the Error Recording Sheet (Appendix C), the highest function word error frequency occurred in the subcategory of Articles. The percentage figures for Forms III and V were 0.70 and 0.50 respectively. Both Forms made a total of 0.56 per cent errors of Articles. The pupils' weakness consisted chiefly of the omission of the determiners 'a/the'.

Pronoun errors which ranked second to Article errors qualify for inclusion here among intralingual errors only in the sense of concord. Most of the errors made in the use of Pronouns were those in which Pronouns appeared out of context, i.e., without antecedents; as well as lack of concord between Pronoun number and that of their referents. In

terms of percentage, Forms III and V pupils made 0.54 and 0.45 per cent errors of Pronoun respectively. Both Forms made a total of 0.47 per cent errors in the use of Pronouns.

Appearing third relative to Article and Pronoun errors were Prepositional errors. Omission and misapplication of Prepositions are phenomena virtually unrestricted to English-as-a-second-language learners. Errors of this subcategory observed in the present study were those of omission and misapplication. Specifically, errors of misapplication of prepositional phrases were three times as numerous as those of omissions. The margin between Prepositional errors made by Form III and Form V pupils was not a broad one. This fact is indicated by the percentage errors of 0.40 for Form III and 0.36 for Form V. Both Forms made a total of 0.37 per cent Prepositional errors.

Sentence Level: Traces of intralingual errors were also noticed at the sentence level. Specifically, errors of Modification and Comparison furnished instances of intralingual interference. Errors of modification consisted mainly of omission or misuse of the relatives 'who', 'which', 'what', 'whose' or 'that'. Each of these is necessary for embedding subordinate clauses to matrix sentences. The omission of relatives points to the degree of difficulty involved in making the right choice of terms from the system. In Chapter II reference was made to the four theoretical categories of 'class', 'system', 'unit', and 'structure'. Somewhere in a structure, English language permits a choice from among a small fixed set of possibilities. In other words, the omitted relatives are terms in the system from which the pupils could have made a choice if it were easy to do so. However, modification

problems were relatively few as reflected in the percentage errors of 0.08 and 0.09 for Forms III and V respectively. For both Forms the percentage error was 0.09.

Likewise, errors involving the use of comparative structure revealed the pupils' inability to choose appropriate inflectional morphemes (-er) and (-est) to mark comparison involving inflectable adjectivals and adverbials, as well as their incorrect choice of the free morphemes 'more' and 'most', which are markers of comparison in the case of uninflectable adjectivals. The result of error analysis at the subcategory level of Comparison shows that Form III pupils made 0.05 per cent errors of comparison. The percentage error relating to Form V was 0.07. Both Forms made a total of 0.06 per cent errors in the use of comparative structure.

Overgeneralization Errors

Instances of errors of overgeneralization abound in this study and cut across the syntactical, lexical, and sentence categories. At the lexical level, slightly more than half of the errors of Imprecision and Wrong Word made were due to faulty analogical thinking, cross association, or to homophony. Analogy and cross association were explained in Chapter II as possible sources of some of the errors made by language learners or as errors indirectly induced by language teachers through their sequencing of curriculum materials and/or methods of teaching. The teaching, for instance, of two synonymous lexical items via the method of definition may lead to an error of analogy or cross association. That is to say, vocabulary drills detached from realistic contexts or

devoid of meaningful situations are likely to lead to errors of analogy or cross association. The example already quoted in Chapter IV is cited here to illustrate an error caused by analogical thinking: "While in the wet season we cannot tread for such a distance." Cognitively, the student has learned that the words 'tread' and 'travel' globally imply movement from one place to another. The problem confronting him is one of inability to see the subtle distinction in modalities (walking, riding, flying, etc.) existing between the two words. Ignorance of the inherent distinctions between the pair of synonyms led to committing the error of overgeneralization illustrated by the quotation.

At the sentence level, overgeneralization errors were particularly noticeable in passive transformations, analogous inflection for plural of mass nouns, inflection of verb forms for 3rd Person singular in a structure in which a modal and a negative marker form part, incorrect verb endings after the infinitive markers 'to' (example: "He wanted to came [sic]"). Errors committed in passive transformations consisted of omissions of the -en morpheme necessary for transforming a transitive verb in a kernel sentence from the active voice to the passive. The source of this error seems to be connected with pattern practice. In the already quoted sentence "People are kill," the student presumably thought analogically of the sentence pattern: "Noun phrase + *be* + Adjective" and transferred this model into a structure demanding a passive transformation which involves an auxiliary provided by a form of the verb *be* followed by the morpheme -en of an inflected transitive verb form. Similarly, the case for errors of inflected mass nouns can be explained in terms of analogical thinking. The pupils' conception

of inflection of noun singular for plural has been carried beyond limits permissible in the grammar of English, and this constitutes an error of overgeneralization. The last two overgeneralization errors, i.e., inflection of verb forms for 3rd Person singular following a modal and a negative marker, and the inflection of a verb form for -ed, following an infinitive marker 'to' can similarly be explained in the context of analogical thinking. The preconceptions that a verb form needs to be inflected for 3rd Person singular and that the -ed form of a verb is required for expressing in English an action already completed lie at the roots of these overgeneralization errors. A summary, in percentage, of frequency distribution of overgeneralization errors committed by both Forms is given at the pertinent subcategory levels in Appendix C.

Interlingual Errors

The components, in this study, of interlingual errors were Translation and Word Order. Judged by the percentages: 0.07 and 0.07 indicating errors of Translation made by Forms III and V respectively, and of the combined percentage, 0.07, made by both Forms, or by the percentages: 0.05 and 0.14 reflecting Word Order errors made by Forms III and V respectively, and of the combined percentage, 0.11, made by both Forms, the conclusion can be drawn that the occurrence of interlingual errors was minimal relative to intralingual or overgeneralization errors. Translation errors, in particular, were of two kinds: lexical and, at the sentence level, obscure idiomatic references to L1 contexts.

Errors of Indeterminate Source (Mazes)

Since errors of this category could neither be traced to interlingual

nor to intralingual roots, the investigator has chosen to classify them as Transitional errors. Transitional errors are generally referred to as developmental errors. The implication is that clarity of thought in a foreign or second language is achieved, if ever, only after a prolonged period of learning to think in that language. In the present study, the percentage of errors of transition (mazes) dropped off from 0.29 in the Form III compositions to 0.14 in the Form V compositions. The drop off in the percentage of transitional errors in Form V compositions could be regarded as an indicator of possible improvement in thinking clearly in the second language. The ability to think clearly is contingent upon an increased acquisition and use of language. Writing itself is an external, higher level, and more complex manifestation of "inner speech" than vocal speech. Inner speech, as Vygotsky (1962: 19-20) has explained, is a form of high level thinking. Thought and language, psychologically speaking, follow different developmental paths before the age of two, coming into a synthesis only thereafter when language comes to clarify thought. Written speech differs from oral speech both in structure and modality. As Vygotsky (1962: 98) has ably described it, written speech, ". . . even its minimal development, requires a high level of abstraction." The child learning to write "must disengage himself from the sensory aspect of speech and replace words by images of words." Viewed from the preceding perspective, a poor command of language or an inadequate practice in written language can hardly ever lead to clarity of thought.

Conclusions and Implications

Comparison of Error Types and Frequency Between Forms III and V Compositions

The global result of the analysis of the data has shown that intra-lingual as opposed to interlingual interference accounted for most of the errors made by the Nigerian pupils in this study. This is a spectacular discovery because it finally confirms the opinion expressed by other researchers that mother tongue interference, emphasized by exponents of the contrastive analysis hypothesis, is not the major source of errors made by second or foreign language learners. Other causes of errors come into the open through error analysis of the actual corpus obtained from second language learners. The next important assignment of this study was to determine the type and frequency of errors made between the two Forms.

The point has already been made in Chapters III and IV that there were more Form V pupils in the randomized sample than Form III, and that the same Form V pupils used more words in their total compositions than did Form III pupils. The conclusions drawn here in terms of comparison of error frequency and type may be regarded as tentative. Notwithstanding this incongruence in the size of the Forms or the disparity in the relative length of the compositions, the facts reflected by the percentage errors and by the chi square test are that both Forms were at, or almost at, par in the types and frequency of grammatical errors of Participle, Verb (derivational), Adjective (derivational), Adverb (derivational), Qualifier, Adjective (lexical), Modification, Translation and Comparison. Form V pupils performed better, relative to the total number of words

used, in Noun Number, Tense. Concordance, Article, Pronoun, Auxiliary, Wrong Word. Truncation, Imprecise Word, and Mazes, but they made more errors of Word Order than Form III pupils. These differences are spotlighted by the chi square figures of 6.07 (Noun No.), 6.80 (Tense), 7.56 (Auxiliary), 6.15 (Verb-lexical), and 5.10 (Wrong Word). These differences may indicate an intervening developmental gap in the acquisition of English as a second language between the two Forms.

There was, however, a conspicuous absence in the Form III compositions of errors of Noun and Adverb at the lexical level, and of errors of Repetition at the sentence level. At the morphological and syntactical subcategory levels, both Forms made similar errors. The leading morphological error types were the inflectional errors of Tense and Noun Number. Prominent among the syntactical error types were Article, Pronoun, and Preposition. Errors of Imprecision and Wrong Word occurring at the lexical level were as noteworthy as those of Morphology and Syntax. Relevant error percentage figures and chi square at these levels appear in Appendix C.

Implications

By and large, the findings of the present study imply that a curriculum in English Composition for Form III and a remediation sequence in English Composition for Form V are warranted. In this regard, the present researcher would like to suggest for consideration the following blueprints in planning corrective English Composition programmes for the two Form levels.

Blueprint for Form III English Composition Curriculum

Relying on the discovery that the Form III pupils' errors of the morphological category showed no evidence of proactive (L1) interference particularly in Tense, and on the understanding that Tense is the essential constituent of the English Auxiliary structure, the objective of an English Composition Curriculum for Form III could be to inculcate the basics of the English Auxiliary structure. This objective could be met through:

1. *Graded topics.* The current practice whereby instructors adhere rigidly to the few composition topics in prescribed English language texts used at each Form of Nigerian secondary schools is inadequate. To deal effectively with the present problem involving Tense and Aspect in the English verb system requires writing compositions on more diversified topics. Thus, topics for English composition at the level of Form III should be based upon situations which encourage a progression from the present tense to the past tense as outlined below.

- (a) *Realistic situations:* Instructors could set up situations leading to the use of the present tense form through an appeal to habitual or everyday occurrences such as: meal times, family radio time, T.V. time, duration of school day and lesson periods, other schoolweek activities having a definite beginning and a definite end, e.g. the school library periods, the day's weather, the day's traffic congestion; or occasional visits to such places as: hospitals, clinics, dispensaries, churches, movies, playgrounds, law courts, agricultural centres, seaports, the police and army barracks, the airport, etc. Besides, situations leading to the use of one of the aspects of the auxiliary structure could be introduced through:

(b) *Simulated situations*: An improvised radio broadcast or sports commentary set up in an English Composition classroom could lead to the pupils' awareness of the Present Progressive action which is handled in English by the auxiliary construction: Noun phrase + Verb phrase + -ing. A full class period of forty minutes could be utilized for the development of the Present Progressive Aspect through the simulated situations.

2. *Oral preparation*. Although the pedagogical notion of oral preparation (oral composition) is not new to Nigerian English language instructors, what is in doubt is regularity in the use of this technique or the seriousness brought to it by instructors and the instructed. The objectives of all oral preparations should be:

(a) to discover, through oral language production, pupils' linguistic difficulty with respect to the use of tense, modal, and aspect engendered by the topic being discussed;

(b) to lead the pupils toward a clarification of otherwise difficult topical ideas through listening to other viewpoints expressed by their classmates on the same topic.

Oral preparation on a selected composition topic could be introduced in any of several ways, e.g., through informal or formal debates, in which the instructor plays an unobtrusive role, or through dialogue.

3. *Student-promoted topics*. The present textbook/teacher-dominated composition topics may not be the best possible approach to the English Composition curriculum in Nigeria. Students should be encouraged to get involved in, or be responsible for, selecting some topics. Student-selected topics might reflect the following areas of interest: their visits to hospitals, shopping centres, market places, or their experiences

of the previous day's weather, the school concert, drama, the church or school choir, or local festivals in which they played parts. Students might also want to prepare special reports on the previous term's important visitors to the school, or to give their impressions of the challenges posed by the subjects examined at the previous year's promotion examination, etc.

The objective of student-promoted topics could be to ensure spontaneous responses to familiar experiences. Such topics could be used in developing the grammatical concept of the perfective tense (-ed without aspect).

The researcher's rationale for suggesting student involvement in selecting topics is that the more students see themselves as participants in their English Composition curriculum building, the more successful the curriculum and its objectives will be.

4. *Regularity of written composition and length.* At least two composition topics not exceeding two pages of foolscap length should be written weekly. When such regularity results in an improved use of language, the frequency could be reduced to a composition topic weekly. Students should also be encouraged to read models of good compositions written by skilled writers on topics within their scope and comprehension.

5. *Evaluation.* The tendency of instructors towards rigid marking of every observable error in students' compositions ought to be discouraged. The marking system which encourages students' gradual buildup of skills in composition writing is one in which only the most serious errors of grammar are pointed out for the writer's correction.

Selectivity of error type deserving major correction should be the major preoccupation of the instructor. Besides, only a few compositions written during a school term need be seriously marked for grading and record purposes. Students should be encouraged to write regularly on teacher-ungraded composition topics and these should be exchanged for correction of prescribed errors among the pupils themselves.

*Remedial Sequence in English Composition
for Form V*

A remedial English Composition programme for Form V could follow the blueprint set up for Form III differing, of course, only in matters of detail, length, and in choice of wider and more sophisticated themes. Such themes could be drawn from the domains of economics, literature, the arts, the sciences, politics or current affairs, etc.

Recommendations for Future Research

Although the question posed in this study with respect to interference phenomena has been answered, the study has opened up a new and promising area for future research. This is all about the problem of lexical poverty. Lexical poverty evident in the pupils' compositions could be traced to any of the following three sources:

- 1) Most Nigerian secondary school pupils behave as co-ordinate bilinguals (Lambert, 1972: 51-61) only when they are within the school environment. At their homes, they prefer L1 to L2 as a medium of social communication. The result of the environment-dictated linguistic style gives rise to what Bernstein (1961: 163-176) has described as a 'restricted code'. Restricted code as used in this context implies that

the second language is sparingly used and that, for the most part, it is used at school. The schools, by using English as a medium of instruction, expect the pupils to show evidence of an 'elaborated code' (Bernstein, 1961: 163-176), i.e., an extensive use of English.

2) The pupils' lexical impoverishment could also be attributed to inadequately equipped school libraries or to inefficient use of library facilities where they exist.

3) Insights from available related literature have revealed that: (a) teachers could indirectly set a limit to vocabulary expansion, at the introductory level of second or foreign language learning, by their controlled oral practice with the basic sentence types and grammatical functions, or at the intermediate level by their not supervising the pupils' use of the limited vocabulary resources available (Twaddle, 1972: 269-274); and (b) by their not giving as much weight or attention to formal teaching of vocabulary as they do to such other issues as grammatical competence, contrastive analysis, reading or writing (Richards, 1976: 77).

In this regard, the following questions seem pertinent for further research:

1. To what extent can the use of school library facilities enhance pupils' acquisition of necessary lexical items in English as a second language?

2. To what extent can a paradigmatic (out of context) as opposed to a syntagmatic (contextual) approach to the teaching of lexical items contribute to an improved acquisition of English vocabulary by Nigerian secondary school pupils?

It is hoped that a research carried out with these suggestions in mind might lead to an improvement in vocabulary expansion for Nigerian students at these two Form levels.

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A P P E N D I X A

EXCERPTS FROM THE WEST AFRICAN SCHOOL CERTIFICATE SYLLABUS 1974

Excerpts from the West African School Certificate Syllabus 1974

SUBJECTS OF EXAMINATION IN 1974 AND CONDITIONS FOR THE AWARD OF CERTIFICATES

SUBJECT GROUPS

- I. Languages: English Language, Latin, Greek, French, German, Italian, African Languages, Arabic.
- II. General Subjects: English Literature, Bible Knowledge, Islamic Religious Knowledge, History, Government, Geography, Economics.
- III. Mathematical Subjects: Mathematics, Modern Mathematics, Additional Mathematics, Additional Modern Mathematics (J.S.P.), Additional Modern Mathematics (Entebbe Project) and Statistics.
- IV. Science Subjects: General Science, Additional General Science, Biology, Chemistry, Physics, Agricultural Science, Health Science.
- V. Arts and Crafts: Art, Music, Needlework and Dressmaking, Cookery, Home Management.
- VI. Technical Subjects: Geometrical and Building Drawing, Geometrical and Mechanical Drawing, Applied Electricity, Basic Electronics, Metal Work, Woodwork.
- VII. Commercial and Secretarial Subjects: Business Methods, Commerce, Principles of Accounts, Shorthand (Single Subject), Typewriting (Single Subject).

For the award of a School Certificate, candidates must enter and sit for a minimum of six and a maximum of nine subjects from any Four Groups, English Language being Compulsory (p. 18)

A P P E N D I X B

LETTERS TO PRINCIPALS AND FORM INSTRUCTORS

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,
Department of Secondary Education,
The University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada.

9 October, 1975.

The Principal,

[Name and address of school here]

Dear Sir,

I am currently researching into possible root causes of errors made in written composition by our secondary school pupils, and would like to request for your permission to assign attached topics to your students in Forms III and V.

I would be grateful for any help you can give for the gathering and mailing of the scripts.

I am also willing to reimburse you for any expenses you may incur.

I thank you in advance and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian T. Mbosowo

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,
Department of Secondary Education,
University of Alberta,
Edmonton, Alberta,
Canada.

9 October, 1975.

Forms III and V English Language Instructors,

Dear Sir/Rev. Father/Sister/Mrs./Miss

I am a Graduate Student at the University of Alberta currently probing possible causes of the types of mistakes noticeable in written English Composition of our Nigerian students.

The success of this undertaking depends on the cooperation of experienced teachers like yourself.

The results of our findings may possibly indicate the direction in which we could channel our teaching strategies and apply our human and non-human resources for the benefit of our country.

I would appreciate it if you would assign the attached topics to your students and, in addition, help in the gathering and mailing of the scripts.

I thank you in advance and look forward to hearing from you at your earliest convenience.

Yours sincerely,

Sebastian T. Mbosowo

A P P E N D I X C

ERROR RECORDING SUMMARY SHEET

Error Recording Summary Sheet

Category	Form			Chi Square	Raw Score	
	III	V	Both		Frequency	
	%	%	%		III	V
<hr/>						
1. Morphology - Inflectional						
1.1 Noun No.	0.92	0.51	0.63	6.07	55	75
1.2 Genitive Construction	0.03	0.10	0.08	0.72	2	15
1.3 Tense	1.37	0.83	0.97	6.80	82	122
1.4 Participle/Gerund	0.03	0.01	0.02	--	2	2
1.5 Concordance	0.54	0.42	0.45	0.89	32	62
2. - Derivational						
2.1 Noun	0.15	0.06	0.09	2.92	9	9
2.2 Verb	0.05	0.03	0.03	--	3	4
2.3 Adjective	0.08	0.05	0.06	--	5	8
2.4 Adverb	0.03	0.03	0.03	--	2	4
3. Syntactical						
3.1 Article	0.70	0.50	0.56	1.98	42	73
3.2 Pronoun	0.54	0.45	0.47	0.60	32	66
3.3 Auxiliary	0.37	0.12	0.19	7.56	22	17
3.4 Preposition	0.40	0.36	0.37	0.28	24	53
3.6 Qualifier	0.07	0.07	0.07	--	4	10
4. Lexical						
4.1 Noun	--	0.07	--	--	--	11
4.2 Verb	0.21	0.05	0.10	6.15	13	8
4.3 Adjective	0.05	0.05	0.05	--	3	8
4.4 Adverb	--	0.03	--	--	--	4
4.5 Wrong Word	1.26	0.81	0.94	5.10	75	119
4.6 Imprecise Word	0.97	0.90	0.92	0.32	58	132
5. Sentence Errors						
5.1 Modification	0.12	0.09	0.09	0.46	7	13
5.2 Truncation	1.06	0.81	0.88	1.83	63	119
5.3 Translation	0.07	0.07	0.07	--	4	10
5.4 Mazes	0.29	0.14	0.19	2.82	17	20
5.5 Repetition	--	0.03	--	--	--	5
5.6 Comparison	0.08	0.07	0.06	--	5	9
5.7 Word Order	0.05	0.14	0.11	1.15	3	20

A P P E N D I X D

SAMPLE OF A FAIRLY WELL-WRITTEN COMPOSITION (FORM V)

Sample of a Fairly Well-written Composition (Form V)

Essay Topic: Your local newspaper has reported a fire incident which had occurred in your town last April. Retell the story about how the fire broke out, what goods and personal property were destroyed and how the fire was finally put out.

I saw on the front page of the Nigerian Chronicle of the 21st April, 1975 a cloudy photograph with bold letters over it which read 'THE FATE OF A NEWLY WEDDED COUPLE'. Out of curiosity I bought the paper. One would not know from the picture what it was all about. It reported that there was a fire out-broak in Abak that previous day and goods and property of hundreds of Naira were damaged.

My heart sank as I was through the first few lines of the account of the incident because a relation of mine was to get married around the same time. No sooner had I concluded it was my cousin's did my eyes catch the names of the couple as Mr. and Mrs. Ogun of No. 2 Market Road Abak.

A stored building belonging to Mr. J. Ogun who was a branch manager of the Arohead Insurance Company. The house belonged to him but the company hired the first floor while he lived in the second one. The fire broke out on a Monday evening while Mr. Ogun went to the bank to deposit the cash for the day. His new bride is a nurse in the nearby hospital and was on duty when the incident occurred. According to the newspaper report there was no outside sign to dictate the fire at the initial stage. The neighbours who saw smoke and flames of fire erupting alarmed the public. Since there was nobody in the house and they had no key to it all they could do was to start evacuating their own property. The alarmed crowd rushed to the scene and started throwing buckets of water into the fire to try and put it out but their efforts were in vain.

Fortunately Mr. Ogun's brother arrived at the scene, caught sight of the devastating flame and ran to the post office where he phoned the Fire Brigade. Immediately the firemen rushed down but before they could reach the roof had fallen and window splinters flew far and wide. When the firemen saw what the paper described as pathetic sight, they did not hesitate to launch an attack on it. At once they erected their gadgets and set to work while some were pumping water into the fire through the broken window others used ladder, not minding the risk involved and climbed the half broken walls to the top. Water was pumped from the top into the fire and this went on for about an hour and a half until the flames gradually receded. The firemen battled on till the fire was completely put out.

An eye witness told the newsmen that some of the bystanders threw themselves on the ground crying and yelling and one could hear them from a two-mile distance. Poor Mr. Ogun went to collect his wife from work after finishing with the bank and both husband and wife came back and found themselves homeless. Not even a pin was saved from neither his office nor from his house. Moreover they were married just a week before the incident, and all their wedding presents, property and furniture for the new home were destroyed. Neither of them could believe his or her eyes, all they were shouting was 'how could it be'. The disaster was said to be one of the worst since the history of the town.

Mr. and Mrs. Ogun reported to the police who were investigating into the cause of the fire. The paper said that the question on everyone's lips was 'how come it?' and concluded that it was a mystery indeed. It was said that the double coincidence of the home and place of work burnt at

the same time caused the couple great concern. It was estimated that goods and property damaged were worth ₦60,000. I can never forget the awful fright I had when I saw the headline and the opening sentence of that publication.

[657 words]

A P P E N D I X E

SAMPLE OF A POORLY-WRITTEN COMPOSITION (FORM III)

Sample of a Poorly-written Composition (Form III)

Class 3C

5/12/75

English Composition
Secondary School - Oku

(5) The celebration of traditional festival in my home town.

The celebration of traditional festival in my home town, usually took place in October the 5th. This time is a time which we harvest yam, We called this time in our languages urah abbah.

If any body brought yams from the farms before this Celebration, the person would be charged to pay some amount according to the crime he or she has comitted.

When it exactly October during time for harvesting the Chief and the elders of our village would come to meet together in the Cheif's house, they would divide the village into three groups. They would also give names to each groups. The first would answered Ukpu, the Second group would be answerd Ikotiwo and the third group Mbuyat.

Ukpu which is the first group will start the yam's celebration.

They would call people from another group, another town and their friend and relatives from another area. In each of the houses in the first group will make sure that their's first is present in the celebration, if not so the Chief would not the particular house to in the celebration.

That day the people concerned will do as much as they could to plead their children and friends they had inverted.

They would dance according to sex, and ages. Young men would line the two side of the roads will guns and gun's powder. Children

will dance first in file, young girls second in twos, women third in twos also, finally men and young men does not take part in shooting of the guns. As each group will dance, those lining at the side of the road will be shooting guns, till every groups had passed and till the celebration is over.

The second week would be for the second which is Ikatiwoh, they would also do as they can to make their own better than the first group own which is Ukpu. They would invest people from different places and also their first son will be present.

The third week would be for the final group which is Mbuyat. They would do the same thing to their own the best.

This Celebration is our custom.

[361 words]

A P P E N D I X F

EFIK/IBIBIO VOWEL AND CONSONANT PHONEMES

Efik/Ibibio Vowel and Consonant Phonemes

Vowels: a e o u ɔ i (two sounds)

Consonants: b d f h k m n ŋ p r s t
 w y kp kw ŋw ny

Source: O.A. Akpanyun, *A Study of EFIK For Schools and Colleges*,
Thomas Nelson and Sons Ltd., London, 1962 (p.3).

A P P E N D I X G

RELATIVE PERCENTAGE OF THE INTRALINGUAL ERRORS

RELATIVE PERCENTAGE OF THE INTRALINGUAL ERRORS

CATEGORY:	INTRALINGUAL	INTERLINGUAL	MAZES
	BOTH FORMS TOTAL	BOTH FORMS TOTAL	BOTH FORMS TOTAL
Noun No.	0.63	-	-
Genitive Constr.	0.08	-	-
Tense	0.97	-	-
Participle	0.02	-	-
Noun (derivational)	0.09	-	-
Verb (")	0.03	-	-
Adjective (")	0.06	-	-
Adverb (")	0.03	-	-
Article	0.56	-	-
Pronoun	0.47	-	-
Auxiliary	0.19	-	-
Preposition	0.37	-	-
Qualifier	0.07	-	-
Verb (lexical)	0.10	-	-
Wrong Word	0.94	-	-
Imprecise Word	0.92	-	-
Modification	0.09	-	-
Translation	-	0.07	-
Mazes	-	-	0.19
Comparison	0.06	-	-
Word Order	-	0.11	-
Grand Total†	5.68	0.19	0.19

†The grand total for the three broad error categories was 6.05. The percentage of intralingual errors computed in relation to the sum of the grand totals was 93.88 and this figure is more than 75% of the errors made by the subjects. Only those subcategories in which traces of intralingual errors were noticed were considered in the computation.

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